

ONLY
69^p



Mum's Plea...
**DON'T LET HER
DIE IN VAIN**

18 January 2018 69p

Issue 3

Pick Me Up!

SAVAGED

As I Slept



Creepy In Crawley!



Hang On In There, Baby!

The Little Boy Who BECAME A BEAST



Beaten By Boxer

He Met My Kids...

**I MET HIS
FISTS**



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THE GUARDIAN

JOE WICKS

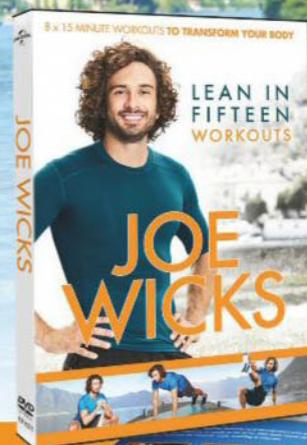
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Our Pick Me Ups!

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What A Week!



Bess Browning, Features Writer
What A Mane!

This pooch has the best locks in town! The Shih Tzu and Pekingese cross has got 18,500 Instagram followers. See her at Lifedeathprizes.com/instagramdog



Ed's Test

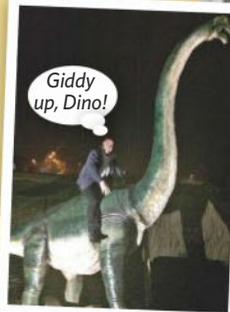
£25! WIN
PUZZLE 1

Can you unscramble this eight-letter word to reveal something Bess' brother is trying to ride? Enter on page 49.

SADURION

What A Big Kid!

Here's my older brother and, despite the fact he's climbing on a massive dinosaur on a mini-golf course, he's almost 29!



20

...that's how many days I now have left of dry January. I'm missing the vino, but it'll help when I do the Cancer Research UK Winter Run in February. Then I really do think I'll need a drink!

What A Masterpiece!

It's sometimes hard to find things to do during the winter months, when you're trying to save the pennies. My boyfriend and I recently bought a couple of blank canvasses and a kids' paint set, then followed an art video on YouTube. Which one do you prefer?



What A Bear Hug!

How cute is my best friend's little girl Georgie May, who's just turned 2? Here she is cuddling up with Big Ted, the bear I used to hug when I was her age. Aww!



Sneaky Peek At This Week!...



p43

Pretty Lingerie



p35



p43



p42



p35



Going Nuts!

p23

Your Pick Me Ups

Share your pics and videos with us and receive a **£25 CASH** pick me up!



My 3-week-old boy Alfie was enjoying his chilled-out day in bed!
Amanda Ure, Glasgow

Look who I met!

Oooh! I bumped into scary movie character the Predator at the local marina - I'm not sure if he sailed in or swam!
Celia Salter, Cowplain, Hants



WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT ON FB...

What was Number One in the charts the day you were born?

Stand And Deliver by Adam & the Ants.
Lindsey Forrest

Chanson D'Amour by Manhattan Transfer.
Tina Fisher

Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep by Middle of th Road - lol!
Helen Hoose

Combine Harvester by the Wurzels!
Debbie Scott

Join in at [facebook.com/pickmeupmag](https://www.facebook.com/pickmeupmag)

We ♥ cake!

The perfect birthday cake for my emoji-obsessed friend!
Louise Milne, Worthing



Get in touch

If you've got a story for these pages, send photos and letters with all names and ages, plus a daytime phone number and full address, to the address below and **GET BIG MONEY**

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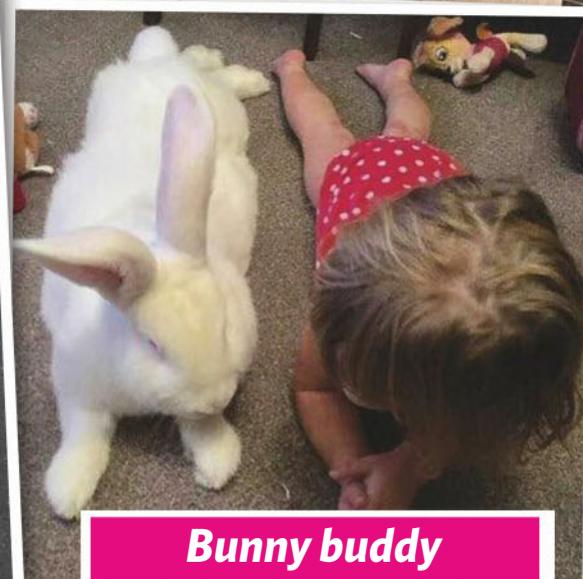
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Check out our website:
www.lifedeathprizes.com



Modest man

Seems this fella's a bit shy. The leaf had fallen and landed in the perfect place to spare his blushes!
Rachael Cleak, Ivybridge



Bunny buddy

Lola, my daughter, loved chatting with her best mate Casper. He's now a friendly ghost, watching over her from rabbit heaven.
Danielle Seago, Romford



Golden oldie?

Phil, my partner, fits in so well with these elderly folk we met on holiday in Kotor, Montenegro!
Gillian Smith, Herrington



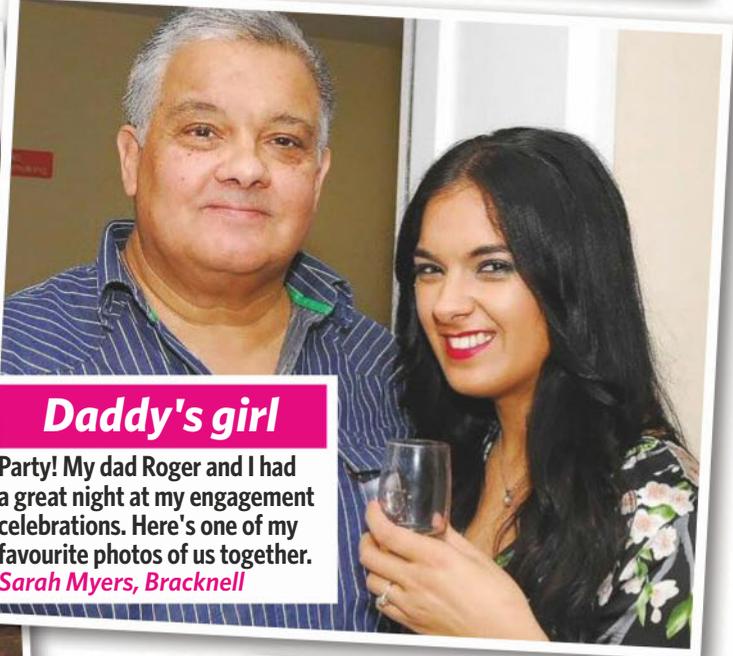
Reflected glory

Ever since we met in 2002, my wife Rachel has become a dab hand at fishing! Here she is with a mirror carp she recently caught.
Jason Robertson, Hanley



Puppy love

Cute alert! Marley and Missy are the best of buds. Don't they look sweet, all cuddled up together?
Shelley Barrett, Sheffield



Daddy's girl

Party! My dad Roger and I had a great night at my engagement celebrations. Here's one of my favourite photos of us together.
Sarah Myers, Bracknell

CUTIE Of The Week!

We love this - hope you do, too...

This unusual white baby baboon really stands out from the crowd!



LIFE! DEATH! PRIZES!

See our website
Lifedeathprizes.com/rarebaboon

Newsflash

Well, we had to tell our daughter that she was going to be a big sister somehow!
Jacqui Ward, Walderslade Woods



Mucky miss!

My beautiful girl Lilith, aged 5, decided to show off her painting skills, but I'm not too sure what she's supposed to be!
Emily Smith, Mansfield



BOXER: MASON

I WAS PUNCH

- Single mum-of-five took a chance on love
- Boyfriend exploded in a violent rage
- Beaten to a pulp as kids slept next door



Sarah Wheatley, 37, Coventry

Bringing up five kids on my own, I usually steered clear of men. Fiercely independent, my kids were my world.

But, in summer 2017, I started chatting to Russell Mason, 35, at a house party.

'I'm a bare-knuckle boxer,' he boasted.

That explained his fit body...

Giggling, I fancied him from the off.

I'd vaguely known him a year, heard good things from friends. But I'd never had a chance to chat, until now.

Flirting away at the party, chemistry fizzed.

Far from putting me off, his boxing attracted me. A gym bunny myself, I loved that he was into his fitness.

Swapping numbers, I could feel the spark between us. And

over the next few days we swapped countless messages.

Then we met up for dinner. Easy-going, chatty, Russell seemed ideal.

'You're gorgeous,' he said.

Despite a strict training schedule, he'd always find time to spoil me.

Soon, I took a massive step and introduced him to my kids.

They loved him.

Phew! He'd have been out of the door without their approval.

Then, around three months after getting together, I was

due an orthopaedic appointment in Birmingham. A car crash earlier in the year had left me with minor injuries – nothing serious.

'Let's make a night of it, get a hotel there?' Russell suggested.

Why not?

Booking a hotel for

10 September, I was excited for our trip away, despite the medical appointment.

We took my two youngest girls, 2 and 5, with us, and the others stayed with their grandparents.

Arriving in the city, Russell

and the girls sat in the waiting room as I was seen by a doctor.

Then we browsed the shops. Felt like a proper little family. Soon, it was time to take my sleepy girls back to the hotel.

Russell popped into an off-licence on the way, bought them some sweets.

'Bathtime!' I called, as the little ones munched away.

After dressing the girls in their pyjamas, I noticed that Russell was swigging from

a litre bottle of vodka.

Must've bought it in the off-licence, I thought.

Strange, he hadn't seemed like a big drinker before.

Flying fist

Putting the girls to bed, I settled next to Russell. He'd drunk almost half the bottle.

'Chill out, Russell, it's only 6.45pm!' I laughed.

He grunted, carried on.

With the girls fast asleep,

Knowing I had to get help, I ran down to the hotel reception

I'd thought we had a future...



HIS BAG



PickMeUp!
BIG STORY

LOOK AT WHAT HE DID TO ME!

Russell watching TV, I decided to have a bath.

When I got back in the room, Russell was asleep on our bed, the empty vodka bottle lying in the bin. No wonder he was comatose!

Still early, I didn't want to sleep. I nipped out to the off-licence, treated myself to a bottle of white wine.

Arriving back in the hotel minutes later, I was looking forward to a bit of 'me' time.

Thinking I'd wake everyone up, I sat in the bathroom and closed the door behind me.

I poured myself a glass of wine and started messaging friends on Facebook.

I've had such a good day, I told my pals.

Then, suddenly, the door was yanked open.

Russell's face was red. 'Who the f*ck are you talking to?' he bellowed at me.

'I'm just on Facebook,' I stammered, shocked.

I'd barely got my words out before I saw his fist flying towards me. That was the last thing I remember.

Around two hours later, I woke up. Ceiling spinning as I opened my eyes, I realised I was no longer in the bathroom. Lying on the bedroom floor, my back and legs were killing me.

The only sound I could hear was Russell's deep snores.

Touching my face, it dripped with blood. Knowing I had to get help, I ran out of the room, down to the hotel reception.

'Are you OK?' a woman

gasped, racing towards me.

I crumpled to the floor.

'My girls,' I whispered.

Police and paramedics arrived, officers went straight upstairs to collect the kids.

Thankfully they were fine.

Flashbacks

Russell was arrested.

In a blur, I was blue-lighted to Birmingham City Hospital.

Russell had repeatedly punched and kicked me in the head. Seeing myself in the mirror, I started to sob.

A broken nose, two black eyes, purple and yellow bruising.

Kept in overnight, I couldn't wait to get home to my babies.

'This is one of the worst cases of domestic violence I've ever seen,' a specialist officer said.

I left the hospital soon after.

My brother had been looking after the kids for me.

As I walked through the door, the kids looked frightened.

'What happened to your face,

Mummy?' they whimpered.

I'm so glad the girls didn't hear a thing.

'Don't worry, I just tripped up in the bathroom,' I replied.

They were too young and innocent to know the truth.

I couldn't walk for a week as the bruises healed. And I'm still suffering from nightmares and flashbacks.

In October 2017, Russell Mason attended Birmingham Crown Court. Trying to tell the court he was acting in self-defence, he pleaded not guilty.

But they saw right through his lies and he was convicted of criminal damage and assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

I was relieved justice was being served - but he was given a measly 20-month sentence.

A joke.

Supposedly a pro boxer, he used his hands as weapons and I was his punchbag.

Now I want everyone to know what a monster this man is.

'We're Here For Sarah...'

Russell Mason was a boxer for Ultimate Bare Knuckle Boxing (UBKB).

Director of UBKB Amanda Smith told the *Coventry Telegraph*, 'UBKB are against domestic violence and fully support Sarah.'

'Russell no longer fights for us and never will. We are here for Sarah if she needs anything at all.'

If you're affected by domestic violence, you can call the free 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline on 0808 2000 247.

WIN PUZZLE 2

Follow It!

£1,000!

Solve the puzzle to spell out a term related to the picture. The arrows show you where to put your answers. The answer is spelled in the yellow squares. Enter on page 49.



				Serious musical drama (5,5)	Jekyll's alter ego	Excavate	Holds (prices)	Criminal slang for diamonds	Dame Vera ____, singer	Company emblem
				Verse		M	Sri Lanka's old name			
				Deeply felt	Poke or delve into	D I G	Blade of corn	Female adult pig	Elisha ____, elevator inventor	Small flat-nosed dogs
						N		Interfere		
				Zoom upwards	Larler, actress	E	Fish lure	Wilfred First World War poet	Cashew or Brazil, eg	More modern
Pavement's border	Migration away from an area	Talk too much	Victorian poet							
			Public square		Simone, singer	Functions				
Hindu exercise philosophy	Sleep late (3,2)		Incompetent				__ Hobley, TV actress	Elizabeth II's only daughter		
		Large endangered animal	Glossy fabric			Toodle-oo!	Infusion for drinking			
Humdrum existence	Audience's cry of approval		Emanation	Zodiac lion	Scottish child					
	Homing bird	Patsy ____, TV actress	Disease, ailment				Fishing item	Political corruption		
Yacht park	Pear seed		Petition (for)		See photo	Delete				
			Take food	Of poor quality			__ Bagnold, author	Severe, stern	Difficulty	
Name in court	Element, symbol Au		iPhone program		Little flap	Fringes				
		__ Farrow, actress		Small mountain lake			Moved quickly			
Shortly, soon	Airy layout (4-4)					Spanish island				
		Agent		Audacious			One of Alcott's 'Little Women'			



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bloodwise.org.uk/hugo

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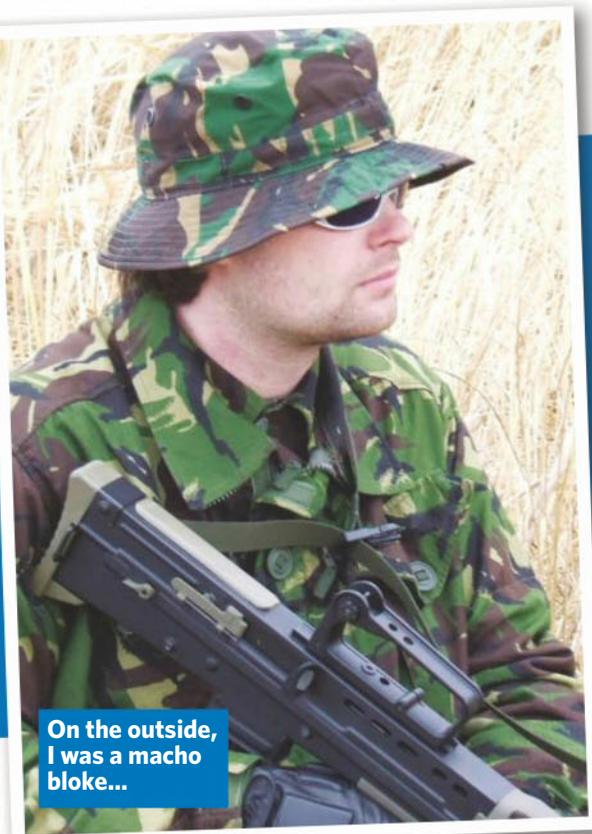
Email Text Phone Please tick here if you would rather not hear from us by post

If you wish to change your preferences in the future or prefer us not to contact you, please call us on **020 7504 2215** or email us on **hello@bloodwise.org.uk**



BORN TO DANCE

Sophie's had a difficult journey to finally make her dreams come true



On the outside, I was a macho bloke...



Sophie Rebecca,
37,
Leeds

As the ballerinas on the TV twirled elegantly on tiptoe, I tried to mimic the move.

I was 4 and watching a performance of *The Nutcracker* on Blue Peter. 'What are you up to?' my mum laughed.

'I want to be a ballerina,' I grinned.

The pretty tutus had me hooked. I wanted to be just like the graceful dancers on TV.

'Boys aren't

ballerinas,' Mum said gently. In that moment, I felt totally crushed.

You see, I wasn't a little girl, I was a boy.

From a very young age, I'd gravitated towards stereotypical girls' toys and pink glitter.

And I preferred playing with girls, rather than boys.

My childhood was very confusing. When I looked in the mirror I saw a little boy staring back. But inside, I felt like a girl.

As I got older, it didn't get any easier.

Then, in my teens, I began researching online.

I read about people being transgender, and suddenly it all made sense.

I wasn't male at all. I was female, I'd just been born in the wrong body.

Only, the Internet

was littered with nasty, vicious comments about trans people.

I started questioning if I really was a freak.

I'm not normal, I'd think, disgusted with myself.

All through my early 20s, I tried bottling up how I really felt.

To the outside world, I was just a typical bloke.

Into motorsports, race-car driving and shooting – nobody knew my secret.

Taking the plunge

As time went on, it became harder and harder to hide.

In public, I was a macho rally driver. Alone, I would experiment with make-up.

I loved making myself look pretty and feminine. But then, I'd have to scrub it off before anyone saw me.

By my mid-20s, I was living

with a group of girlfriends.

I'd never discussed my feelings with them, but they

had an inkling I liked make-up.

One evening when I was 26, we planned a night out to an LGBT nightclub...

Let's make you up,' one of my friends giggled.

'Oh, go on then,'

I beamed back, not taking much convincing.

The girls helped me apply make-up – eyeshadow, lashes, lipgloss – the lot.

'I look incredible,' I gasped.

I didn't want to take it off.

So I took the plunge and agreed to go to the club dressed in heels and a little dress.

I had a bad case of jitters just before we set off.

'I don't know if I can do this,' I said nervously.

But all my friends were really supportive, urged me on.

And before I knew it, I was dancing away without a care in the world.

Nobody batted an eyelid.

And in that moment, I knew I couldn't keep hiding who I really was.

So I went to see my GP.

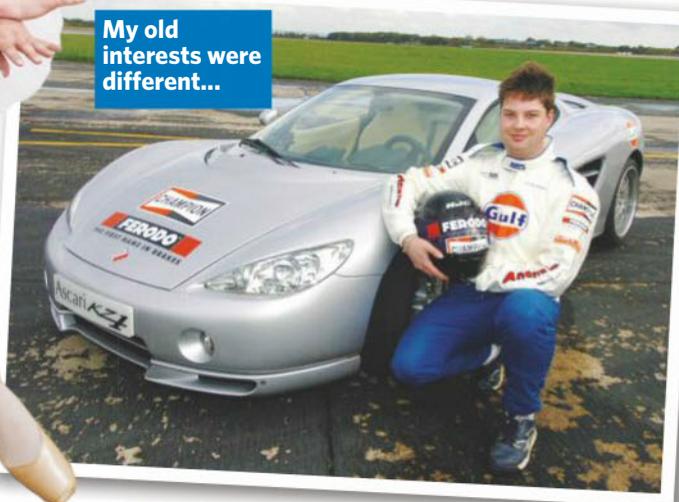
I was referred to a psychologist, but there was a seven-year waiting list for referrals to a gender-identity clinic.

'There's nothing we can do to help you,' the psychologist said.

So, over the next few years,

As time went on, it became harder and harder to hide

My old interests were different...



I yearned to learn the female roles



E



I'VE EMERGED AS A SWAN – THE REAL ME!

begin their transition. I spoke to my doctor again, but I was told the waiting list for referrals was still long. This time, I decided to pay to go to a private clinic. After a lot of consultations and meetings, in 2015, I began hormone-replacement therapy. The change in me was almost instant. My boobs, bum and hips all ached as they began to develop. My skin and hair started to soften, and my eyelashes grew thicker.

Passing exams

By now, I'd already told close friends and family – they were all supportive. Seeing my body change gave me the confidence boost I needed to help with my ballet dancing. I ditched the rally driving, and started performing female roles in studio dance classes.

But, one evening, just before I was about to go on stage, I heard someone whisper behind my back.

'He's really good,' they said. I was devastated.

I knew it was meant to be a compliment, but the fact that I was still seen as a man hurt.

I haven't let it affect me, though. Since I started doing ballet, I've passed an exam at the Royal Academy of Dance.

Ballet has brought out the real me. Though I've still got a long way to go...

But when I look in the mirror as I dance, I see the person I truly am.

A strong, confident, beautiful woman!

I continued to bottle it all up. Occasionally, I'd have a girls' night out to let off steam, or an evening in painting my nails.

I lived for those times when I could be myself.

Breaking free

Meanwhile, my childhood dreams of becoming a ballerina continued to brew.

I envied the elegant and feminine dancers.

I tried to find a ballet group,

but I didn't want to learn the male roles.

'I want to learn the female routines,' I explained.

Only, the dance teachers didn't understand.

'That's just not possible,' one of them laughed.

I couldn't find an instructor to take me seriously. They saw me as a man, no idea I was a woman desperate to break free.

Finally, aged 33, I found

a tutor who was willing to teach me. I started off in group classes learning the male lead roles.

But I also had private lessons learning the female moves.

I was in my element, eventually dancing on pointe.

I'd never felt more elegant. And I had a real talent, too!

Then in 2013, aged 34, I saw a video online about trans people taking hormones to

New Figures

The number of children being referred to gender-identity clinics has quadrupled in the past five years. Figures from the Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS) show that 84 children aged between 3 and 7 were referred last year, compared to just 20 in 2012/13. For more info about childhood gender dysphoria, go to: mermaidsuk.org.uk.

Your Brainwaves.

Together, we've got it sussed! Earn **£25 CASH** for your brilliant tips!

Defrost frozen bread faster by placing it on a pan lid while you're cooking! The heat will defrost it in no time.
Helen Baldwin, Leeds



Your Best CARWAX Tips

1 Brush with the dustpan

Give your dustpan a quick coat of car wax and any grime will glide off quickly!
Eleri Webber, Little Neston

2 Mirror, mirror

Stop the bathroom mirror from fogging up by applying a tiny bit of car wax. Let it dry and then buff with a soft, dry cloth!
Sarah Bradley, Cardigan

3 Play it again...

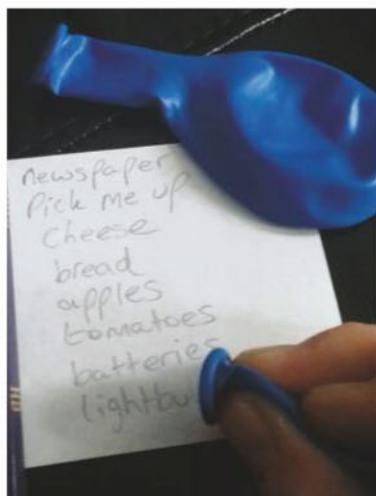
Fix scratched CDs by applying some wax with a soft cloth. Wash with water, let it dry, and it'll be playable again!
Naomi Clifton, Stone

4 Counter-top tip!

Restore the shine to your marble or granite worktops by using car wax to help smooth and fill any fine scratches!
Lucy Rapace, Madeley



It can be very frustrating to find and remember the expiry date on tablets, so I mark them up with a permanent marker so I can instantly see the date.
Kim Yates, Billesley



If you're stuck for an eraser, a latex balloon makes a great rubber, if you make a mistake when writing your shopping list! I won't be crossing out the second item though!
Angela Laird, Wirral

Tip of the Week



Not wanting to throw away my grandson's wellies when he got too big for them, I made them into plant pots as a keepsake.
Amanda Gumbley, via email

Top Mum's Tip!



I reuse the inner bags from cereal boxes as sandwich bags for my daughter's packed-lunch box.
Pat Lowther, Durham



Don't discard the seal when you open milk. Pop it back inside the lid and it'll still work to prevent any spillages if you bump the bottle.
Collette Carral, Longridge

Our Bargains!



Struggle getting lids off jars? The air vacuum makes it difficult, but if you puncture the lid with something sharp, you'll release the air and make it much easier to open.
David Anderson, Sunderland



After Mum passed away, Dad worried he'd forget the family's special occasions, so I wrote all of the important dates in a calendar for him, so he'd remember!
Sharon Carey, Runcorn

Snap Me Up!

We've done the research - you save the dosh!

Get Snacking

Tesco has slashed the price of the Food Should Taste Good range of gluten-free tortilla chips to **just £1.50 each** (normally £2.19) until 18 January. They're baked, not fried, making them a healthier alternative to your average crisps.



OFFER OF THE WEEK



Little Bites

Great for little fingers, Annabel Karmel Famous Finger Foods in Mighty Meaty Bites or Yummy Chicken & Apple Bites are a brilliant source of protein. Pick up a pack for your littl'un for **only £2** (normally £2.30) at Tesco until 30 January.

Drink Up...

If you're hitting the gym this January, keep energy levels up with the Protein Water Co range of natural protein-infused waters. Now **just two for £3** (normally £2.35 each) at Boots until 31 January.



SAVING OF THE WEEK



Crunch Time

Nomadic Yogurt & Oats Crunchy Clusters Pots are now **just £1** (normally £1.35) at Tesco until 5 February. Available in strawberry or chocolate and with a handy spoon included, it's the perfect on-the-go breakfast.

One For Mums

Get **35 per cent off** tickets to The Baby Show with MadeForMums at the ExCel London when you use the code PICKMEUP at thebabyshow.co.uk before 18 January. Running between 2-4 March, it has everything you need for bump, baby and you!

OUR TOP TIP



PMU's £££ EXPERT Cheap hols

1 Shop around
Compare the cost of loads of airlines, hotels and car hire companies at Kayak.co.uk. You can even add your hold luggage on to avoid hidden costs later on.

2 Change your browsing mode
Switch your browser to private. Websites often have cookies to track how many times you've looked at flights, then they bump up the price.

3 Be flexible
If you can only go away in school hols, the last week in August and first in September tend to be cheapest.

4 Go indirectly
Taking an indirect flight with a stopover or a change may be inconvenient, but could save you loads of cash.

5 Avoid charges
Budget airlines like Ryanair allocate seats, meaning it's not really necessary to splash out on priority boarding and prebooked seats.

COMPILED BY JESS BEECH

PHOTO: (POSED BY) MODEL: ALAMY

I Survived This MANGLED WRECK

Soon after learning to drive, Sarah had to learn to walk again



Sarah Dent, 18,
Middleton-in-Teesdale

Parking the car, I took a deep breath. It was 7 April 2017 and I'd just finished my driving test.

It'd been my second attempt so I was a little nervous. But I had a good feeling about this one.

It'd been a great route, one I'd practised a few times before.

And... 'I'm happy to say you've passed,' the examiner smiled.

Yes! 'Thank you,' I said. I was so ecstatic I almost hugged him. I could finally get rid of my L-plates.

My mum Gillian, 55, and dad Philip, 45, had already bought me a car – a gorgeous, blue Clio.

I couldn't wait to get behind the wheel.

Excited for me, my boyfriend Jordan, 18, took me out to celebrate that night.

'Just be careful,' Mum

warned. 'You may have passed your test but you're still a newbie on the roads.'

I listened to Mum and made sure I always drove carefully.

But I loved the freedom it gave me – nipping to sixth form and friends' houses.

Out of control

Just over a month later, I was driving over to Jordan's house in the early evening when it started to get dark.

Rain was pouring down outside so I was glad to be in the comfort of my car.

It was a route I knew well, only, as I approached a bend in the road, my back wheels started to skid.

I remember a moment of panic. Then... *Nothing*.

I woke up in a hospital bed with a fuzzy head, tubes in my mouth and nose.

Terror ripped through me. *What happened? Why was I here? And where was my car?*

I passed in and out of

consciousness for the next couple of days.

But, as soon as I was well enough, my parents told me what had happened.

The roads had been slick from the rain – and, as the car skidded in the wet, I'd spiralled out of control.

I'd smashed into the kerb – and another vehicle, unable to avoid me in time, collided with the left side of my car.

The crash had been so bad, firefighters had had to cut me out of the mangled wreckage.

Thankfully, the woman in the other car only had a sprained wrist.

Horribly injured, I'd been anaesthetised and treated at the scene by medics.

Then I'd been airlifted to The James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough.

A firefighter on the scene had recognised me and called my dad. He and Mum rushed to the accident before following me to the hospital.

Doctors didn't have good news. I'd been taken straight into surgery for an op on my spleen and diaphragm.

I also had a bleed on the brain and a fractured skull, neck and pelvis.

'You should prepare for the worst,' doctors had warned.

My injuries were so severe



TOUCH AND GO

that doctors worried I'd have brain damage.

When I didn't turn up at his, Jordan had frantically tried calling me. Eventually Dad, who'd got hold of my phone at the scene, answered and gave him the bad news.

Jordan had raced to the hospital, too, and they'd all sat by my bed, hoping I'd wake up.

It was a long wait.

I was unconscious in Intensive Care for over a week.

Even when I finally came



With my family and the ambulance crew who saved me



IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT I GOT OUT ALIVE

round, the severity of what had happened didn't sink in. 'Is my car OK?' I croaked to Jordan.

Of course, it wasn't. It was a crumpled mess.

Thankfully the operation had been a success.

I was on morphine for the pain and needed lots of bed rest – but, gradually, I recovered.

Doctors were amazed to find I didn't have brain damage.

My parents and Jordan visited every day – and, a month later, I could go home.

Gruelling

Because of all my injuries, I had to learn to walk again, and physio was gruelling.

I used a wheelchair at first and slept downstairs. But I was determined, and within seven weeks I was back on my feet.

The crash had happened just before my A levels.

Thankfully, my coursework and grades before the accident

were taken into consideration.

I got two Bs and a distinction. *Some good news, at last!*

In August last year, I met the paramedics and air-ambulance team who saved my life.

Listening to what happened is so strange. I don't remember anything – it's like they're talking about someone else.

But if I hadn't been airlifted to hospital, I wouldn't be here now.

I worried getting back in a car would be traumatic, so Dad took me to a quiet street to practise and help me build up my confidence again.

It worked. I drive regularly now and even have a new car.

I still can't believe I had such a horrific crash. Or that I'm here to tell the tale.

I was one of the lucky ones. I owe my life to the paramedics and air-ambulance team.

I'm just glad that ill-fated drive wasn't my last.



Life Savers

There are around 36 air ambulances in the UK. Sarah was rescued by the Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS), which relies on public donations and needs to raise around £5 million every year to keep its service running. To find out how you can help, visit gnaas.com

Here to tell the tale

Your Dilemmas

Can't make your mind up? Write to us at *Pick Me Up!* for good advice



Win Back Partner?

Ciara, 27,
Newcastle

My girlfriend recently relapsed into severe depression. It was heartbreaking to see her suffer and I stood by her every step of the way. It didn't help that her parents stopped speaking to her because she was in a gay relationship.

She seemed to be making progress with a new therapist but, last week, she dumped me, saying I deserved better. I was devastated and angry after sticking by her, but I realise she thinks she's sparing me from her problems. But I love her and want to help her. Should I try to win my girlfriend back?



YES

Pick Me Up!
reader **Natasha Watts** says:

'She thinks she's doing you a favour, and it looks as though you already know that. She'll feel you deserve better and that anyone is better than her at the moment. But when she gets the help she needs, she'll be glad to have you there.'

'Stick by her. Don't pressure her to keep at the relationship, but be there for her until she's ready to start again.'



NO

Pick Me Up!
reader **Joanne Dobinson** says:

'At the moment you should just tell her that you're fine with the break-up, so that she doesn't have to carry that extra burden of feeling responsible for hurting you.'

'But you should also tell her you still want to be friends, and that you'll be there to support her and help her get whatever she needs.'

Tell Adopted Son The Truth?

Karen, 53,
Hove

Eight years ago, my sister and brother-in-law adopted a little boy when he was just a baby. They originally planned to tell him about his adoption when he was old enough to understand - but he's nearly 9 now and they're still putting it off.

My sister says they're worried about how he'll react, so they're thinking about delaying it for a few more years. But I don't agree - I think he's old enough to know the truth.

I also worry someone in the family will slip up and my nephew will find out by accident, and I don't think it's fair to put everyone under that kind of pressure.

Do I suggest to my sister she should tell her son the truth?



YES

Pick Me Up!
reader **Lorna Dutton** says:

'Young kids take things like this much better than you'd expect. You shouldn't lie to children or withhold important information - they need to know they can trust their parents.'

'I'd suggest to your sister and her husband that they tell their son the truth, and answer any questions he has. They'll build a much stronger relationship, based on trust, not secrets.'



NO

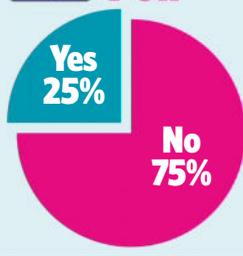
Pick Me Up!
reader **Gemma Summers** says:

'This isn't for you to decide. His parents will already be worrying about how he'll react, without you dictating to them. If the tables were turned how

would you react?

'The more you interfere, the less his parents will act. Instead, you should support your family in this difficult time. Be there for your nephew, too. A family feud won't help anyone when the truth finally comes out.'

f **Reader Poll**



ADVICE LINES

● Family trouble? Call the Family Lives helpline on 0808 800 2222, or visit

the website at familylives.org.uk

● To find your nearest Relate centre, call 0300 100 1234 or visit relate.org.uk

● Relationship problems? Visit thecoupleconnection.net for free advice, support and a chance to talk about worries on the forum.

HEALTH & Happiness

Real-Life **PLUS** Trends, Info and Advice

Memories To CHERISH

Yvette and Stephen treasure every day with their little boy



Yvette Pitts, 31, Manchester

My son Sebastian was 8 weeks old when the problems began. It was September 2014 and our poor little lad was sickly and dehydrated.

The GP referred us to Bolton Hospital, where Sebastian spent 12 days having tests.

After, my husband Stephen, 33, and I were summoned to the Genetics lab at Manchester Children's Hospital.

There, doctors revealed shocking news...

'Sebastian has Leigh syndrome,' we were told.

They couldn't be sure of the cause, but this rare, incurable genetic condition would lead to his nervous system gradually deteriorating.

He wouldn't walk or talk. Worse, our boy might not even make it to 2 years old.

'Why our son?' I sobbed. But we had to be strong. He needed constant care. With chronic muscle

weakness, Sebastian was drained of energy and his development was delayed.

When I'd been pregnant, Stephen and I had talked about all the things we'd do as a family, like going to Disneyland. They seemed impossible now.

'Why?' asked my pal Rachael. *Good question. Why shouldn't we make the most of the time we had with our boy?*

We made a mini bucket list, while Rachael set up a GoFundMe page to raise money so we could take Sebastian to amazing places and make some great memories.

Stephen and I, and our incredible friends, took part in all sorts of challenges.

Thanks to donations, we've been able to fill our son's life with some lovely activities.

In 2015, we took him to a Man United match, the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, and best of all, Disneyland Paris. He loved meeting Pluto!

But what Sebastian likes



Proud of our wonderful Sebastian



We've done so many great things

more than anything is ice hockey.

Last March, we took him to see his team, Manchester Storm, take on the Belfast Giants. Stephen had e-mailed Storm's manager, so Sebastian met both teams – on the ice!

Now 3, Sebastian has defied every expectation, and we're so proud of him.

We know what the future holds. Until then, we've got lots of happy memories to make.

FACT FILE

Leigh syndrome is a rare neurodegenerative condition. It causes the central nervous system to gradually decline. Each case differs, but symptoms often include muscle weakness, loss of head control, spasticity and respiratory problems. There is no cure or effective treatment for Leigh syndrome.

To donate to Sebastian's bucket list, visit gofundme.com/team-sebastian or search 'Team Sebastian' on Facebook.

WORDS: JAMES HANMAN. PHOTOS: CATERS NEWS AGENCY, GETTY IMAGES



What's Normal What's Not!

Teeth grinding

This and jaw clenching are fairly common. Most people don't even realise they're doing it. Often related to stress, it doesn't always cause symptoms, but persistent grinding can

lead to headaches, facial pain, a stiff jaw and disrupted sleep. Over time, it can leave your teeth worn down, or even broken! Make an appointment with your dentist if your teeth are worn, damaged or sensitive as a result of grinding.

Give Yourself A Lift

Drinking warm lemon water first thing in the morning helps to flush out toxins, aids digestion and encourages production of bile. It's also said to nourish brain and nerve cells.



INSTANT Appointment

With Dr Arabella Onslow

Dr Arabella Onslow has been a GP for 11 years and was Rosemary Conley's Health Professional Slimmer of the Year in 2012 after losing 10st.



A The best thing would be to get a physio assessment of your mobility needs. They'll be able to find the right aid for you and show you how to use it properly.

False sight

Q I'm nearly blind and yet I keep seeing things. For a few minutes at a time, I can see people moving or landscapes, then they go again. I know they're not real, but is this a sign I'm getting dementia too?
Cheryl, Hull

A This is Charles Bonnet syndrome, a well-known phenomenon caused by the brain trying to interpret altered signals from failing eyesight. It is nothing to do with dementia.



Dry skin

Q My skin gets so dry in the winter. Why is that, and what would help to ease the symptoms?
Gabbie, Salcombe

A Humidity is lower in winter, so it's easier for the skin's moisture to evaporate. Using an oily emollient can trap moisture in, especially if you use it on damp skin as soon as you get out of the shower or bath.

Walking aids

Q I'm quite unsteady on my feet nowadays and have fallen a couple of times. I should have a stick, but I find them difficult to use. I'm not ready for a walking frame yet, so what's best to use?
Wendy, Chesham

CONTACT US

For advice, contact us via one of the methods below. Letters and e-mails are selected randomly for publication. Sorry, Dr Onslow can't reply personally. **WRITE TO:** Pick Me Up!, 161 Marsh Wall, London E14 9AP. **E-MAIL:** pickmeup@timeinc.com

Health On Twitter Follow me @DrBellyButton



TRUE or FALSE

Cogan's syndrome

- 1** Cogan's is more common in older or elderly people. True False
- 2** It affects the eyes and ears. True False
- 3** Steroids can treat it. True False
- 4** It's caused by a bacterial infection. True False

1 FALSE Anybody of any age can be affected by Cogan's syndrome, but it is more common in young adults in their 20s and 30s. It affects men and women equally.

2 TRUE This rare disease causes inflammation of the inner ears and eyes. Symptoms include vision difficulties, hearing loss, dizziness, nausea, fever and fatigue.

3 TRUE Most sufferers are given prednisolone and other kinds of steroids. Further treatment with immunosuppressant medication may also be needed for some patients.

4 FALSE The cause of Cogan's syndrome is currently unknown, though some believe it to be an autoimmune disorder.

Next Week IBS



Batt Like M

Julie began suffering from a rare condition while her daughter fought cancer



Julie Bover, 41, Gravesend

My family knows all about cruel twists of fate. Three weeks after her first birthday, my daughter Georgina was diagnosed with kidney cancer.

We and my husband Jem, now 53, had been trying for a baby for six years before our first round of IVF gave us our beloved Georgina in 2009.

'We can't lose her,' I wept. But Georgina faced a battle. Both of her kidneys had Wilms' tumours, a rare form of cancer that develops from cells leftover from the womb.

A doctor myself, I knew this was serious.

On 15 June 2010, Georgina had surgery at Great Ormond Street Hospital to remove

5%

...that's the percentage of cancers linked to diabetes and obesity, says a recent study.

...ing... My Girl



Two strong girls, facing the world



My poorly baby in hospital

both of her kidneys.

The surgeon saved part of one kidney by cutting out the cancer.

'She'll need a transplant in the future,' the consultant told us.

Georgina then had 28 weeks of chemo, as well as eight days of radiotherapy.

The poor love was so sick from the treatment, vomiting and losing what little hair she had, including her eyelashes.

But, through it all, Georgina never stopped giving us her sweet, little smiles.

By 2014, she'd grown into a healthy, happy schoolgirl.

But as Georgina improved, I began having problems.

In May 2015, I woke up at 4am with a crushing pain in my chest – like I was having a heart attack!

I was only 39 and didn't drink or smoke.

But the hospital confirmed it, and explained that it was caused by myopericarditis, an inflammation of the sac

covering the heart.

After five days in hospital, I was still suffering from swollen joints, shortness of breath and bloody diarrhoea.

But there was some very good news.

In April 2016, Georgina was given the all-clear!

We were over the moon – and, though my health wasn't great, I clung to the hope that we could move on.

But a month later, I was taken to hospital again as I was bleeding from my bowel.

'Mummy, are you going to have cancer, too?' asked Georgina tearfully.

Doctors ran tests, and

found the startling truth.

I was diagnosed with Behcet's disease, an extremely rare autoimmune condition, causing inflammation of tissue and blood vessels.

A long-term condition, it was incurable.

I take immunosuppressant medication, but this leaves me prone to infections.

Georgina and I have been through our fair share, but we're tough girls, and won't be kept down.

Georgina was recently a VIP guest at the opening of a new Cancer Research UK store in Kent.

I couldn't be more proud of her. She battled the odds and she won.

I only hope I can do the same.

FACT FILE

Behcet's disease is a rare autoimmune condition that leads to inflammation of the blood vessels and tissues. The illness is poorly understood and hard to diagnose, as symptoms can be very wide-ranging. They often include ulcers, eye pain, blurred vision, headaches, and swollen, painful joints. There's no cure, but medication can manage the symptoms.

Men's Health

With Dr Arabella Onslow



Q After an intensive sprint session, I got bum pain, which I thought was hamstring tendonitis. Massage made it worse, and now I can't run.
Robert, Wolverhampton

A This sounds more like ischial bursitis. The bursa is a fluid-filled sac and sits under the tendon, enabling it to slip easily over the bone when moving. It needs rest, ice and sometimes a steroid injection.

Mum Knows Best



Nip nightmares in the bud

When my girls have bad dreams, we cuddle and talk it through. They just need reassurance they're safe and it wasn't real. We also leave their lights on low with dimmer switches.
Debbie Hadden, via Facebook

THE BEAS

Of Manchester

What turned Trevor Hardy from young thief to violent serial killer?

Trevor Joseph Hardy was the baby of the family. Born in June 1945, he was the youngest of three siblings growing up in northeast Manchester.

Then, in the summer of 1953, his baby brother Colin was born.

It changed everything for Trevor. Deeply jealous of Colin, he felt usurped.

And in July 1953, just a month after Colin was born, Trevor Hardy committed his first crime – larceny – or theft, as it's now known.

Hardy was given a conditional discharge, but he'd had a taste of

criminality. And liked it.

Theft soon turned into house-breaking, shoplifting, and he spent his youth in and out of approved schools and borstals, but he often ran away.

Eventually, aged 15, Hardy was so out of control, he was sent to an adult jail for the first time.

But, back on the streets a few months later, his offending got worse. Hardy became violent, committing assaults and robberies. Throughout his 20s he was in and out of prison.

In 1972, he was jailed for five years for unlawful wounding after he attacked a man with a pickaxe. The seriousness of

his crimes was escalating.

But no-one knew quite how dangerous Hardy had become...

Until, in October 1975, then 30, and a year after his release, he met his younger brother Colin, 22, in a pub.

Talk turned to a recent local murder.

That July, Wanda Skala, 17, had been walking home from the pub where she worked as a barmaid when she was attacked. She was strangled, battered over the head and sexually assaulted.

Grisly discovery

Her body was found the following morning, partially buried on a building site.

The violent murder shocked

the community. But Hardy had a startling confession.

'I did it,' he bragged to Colin when he met him in the pub. 'I hit her with a brick.'

After confessing to murder, Hardy beat up his brother, leaving him unconscious.

The next morning, terrified Colin went to the police. Trevor Hardy was hauled in for questioning for Wanda's murder.

Only, Hardy's then-girlfriend provided a false

alibi and the police let him go.

He was back on the streets to continue his reign of terror.

Then, in March 1976, Colin picked up a newspaper.

Splashed across the front page was the news that another girl had been murdered

His girlfriend provided a false alibi and police let him go

MURDERED AT HIS HANDS



Lesley Stewart



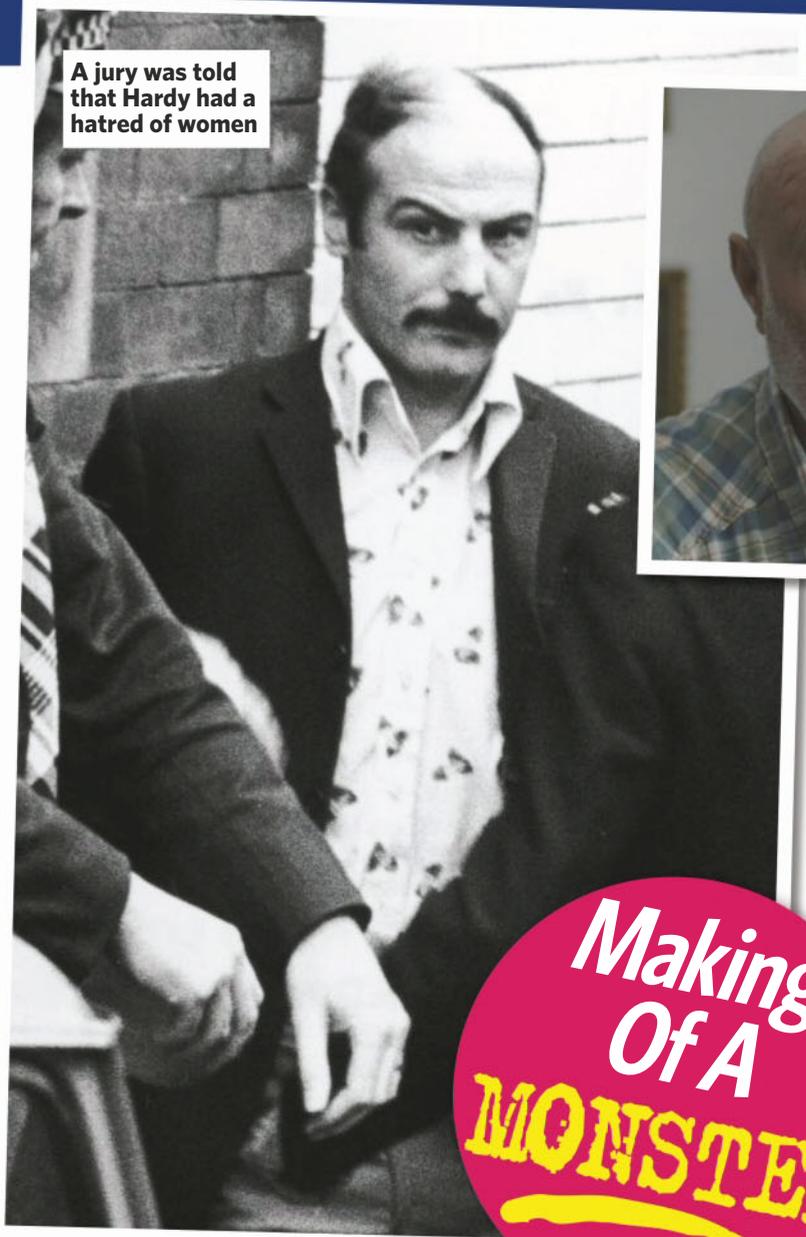
Wanda Skala



Sharon Mosoph

T er

A jury was told that Hardy had a hatred of women



Brother Colin was savagely attacked, too

in Manchester.

Sharon Mosoph, 17, had been walking home from a work party when she'd been attacked. Beaten, strangled and stripped, her mutilated body was thrown into Rochdale Canal.

'I just knew it was him,' said Colin.

Police suspected Hardy, too. By now he was also the main suspect in another attack.

A young woman had been throttled so violently in a pub loo, she'd bitten off part of her tongue.

But Hardy was on the run.

Weeks later, he was tracked down to a house in Stockport and arrested. He denied everything.

But this time his girlfriend refused to give him an alibi, and retracted her earlier one.

Police charged Hardy with the murders of Wanda Skala and Sharon Mosoph.

Then, while on remand awaiting trial, Hardy made a sudden, shocking confession. Not only to both murders, but also to that of another girl.

Janet Lesley Stewart, 15, known as Lesley, had been heading to a New Year's Eve party in December 1974 when she'd vanished.

Her worried family had filed a missing persons report and

an investigation was launched.

But she'd vanished without a trace. Her disappearance had been a mystery - until Hardy claimed he'd come across Lesley and mistaken her for a schoolgirl with whom he'd been infatuated.

He told detectives he'd stabbed Lesley to death, then buried her in a shallow

grave on Newton Heath.

Taking him to the scene, they found some of the poor girl's remains.

But that still wasn't the end of Hardy's depravity.

He admitted visiting Lesley's body several times, tearing apart her decaying

corpse with his bare hands in a bid to destroy the evidence further.

In April 1977, Trevor Joseph Hardy, 31, went on trial at Manchester Crown Court.

Despite his jail confession, he pleaded not guilty.

But the evidence against him was compelling. On the third day of his trial, Hardy fired his legal team and took up his own defence. Now he pleaded guilty

to manslaughter by reason of diminished responsibility. He claimed he was mad, not bad.

Driven by anger

There was talk of a childhood head injury having led to his unspeakable violence. Hardy tried to persuade the jury he had a mental illness and needed help, not punishment.

But the prosecution was adamant that Hardy killed simply because he was evil - that he was driven by anger, a hatred of women, and killed indiscriminately.

The jury agreed.

Hardy, dubbed the Beast of Manchester by the Press, was convicted of all three murders and jailed for life.

Fearing his release, the families of Hardy's victims campaigned tirelessly to have him locked up for life.

And in 2008, the High Court confirmed 'sadistic' Trevor Hardy would never again see the light of day.

He didn't.

In September 2012, Hardy suffered a heart attack in his Wakefield prison cell.

He later died in hospital.

And, as his brother Colin says, 'The world is a better place without him in it.'

Making Of A MONSTER

Despite his jail confession, Hardy pleaded not guilty

Dr Payne-James



Now Watch This

A fascinating new documentary explores previously unseen letters and documents found in Hardy's jail cell when he died. Forensic medical expert Dr Jason Payne-James calls upon a network of forensic, psychology and investigative experts to reveal the serial killer's secrets. Watch *Britain's Forgotten Serial Killer: Trevor Hardy* on Sunday 14 January at 10pm on Crime + Investigation, Sky Channel 553, Virgin 275, BT 328 or Talk Talk 328.

Genius Or Totally Bonkers?

We put some truly original products to the test...

Impossible Rice Puzzle, £19.99, firebox.com

If you love cracking codes and solving puzzles, this is for you! Made up of 300 almost identical pieces, the extremely complicated jigsaw creates a picture of a bowl of rice when completed.



Verdict:
BONKERS!

Fiendish and fun, but who has the time?!

Tweezerman No Mess Mascara Guard, £12, lookfantastic.com

Mascara smudges are set to be a thing of the past with this little tool. Simply hold it under your lashes while applying mascara to protect your foundation.



Verdict:
GENIUS!

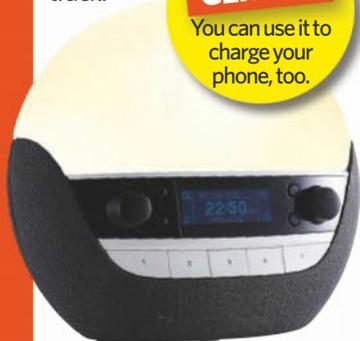
This is brilliant - how did we live without it?

Lumie Bodyclock Luxe 750D, £199, amazon.co.uk

Drift off and wake up easier with this clever alarm clock. It mimics the light and colours of a real sunset and sunrise, to help keep your body clock on track.

Verdict:
GENIUS!

You can use it to charge your phone, too.



WIN PUZZLE 3 £300!

Crack It!

Work out which letter each number represents. When you've filled the grid, put the correct letters into the Prize Answer boxes at the bottom to spell out a word. **Enter on page 49.**

5	21	2	24	15		22	11	16	18	23		2	
2		18		18		13		20		13	24	6	22
15	26	7	24	2	25	23	8	5		18		14	
16		1		24		25		8	24	12	21	13	20
6	13	22		6	18	8	12	23				25	
		21		7		9		8	24	5	8	23	16
22	11	16	18	2	19	16		24		1		7	
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	22		2		2	5	8	6	8	12	8	16	6
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A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

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PRIZE ANSWER

25	21	2	24	23	16	6
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Eat Me Up!

Great grub and top foodie treats for you and your family

Portuguese Almond Cake

Treat of the Week

Makes: 12 Prep Time: 15 min plus chilling Cook Time: 15 min

- 100g unsalted butter
- 200g caster sugar
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 100g self-raising flour, sifted
- 100g ground almonds
- 1tsp almond essence
- 1tbsp brandy

Buttercream icing:

- 100g unsalted butter
- 3tsp natural yogurt
- 1tsp vanilla paste
- 1tsp almond essence
- 150g icing sugar
- Flaked almonds, toasted, for decoration

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/ Gas 4. With an electric whisk, cream butter and

sugar together until the mixture is light and fluffy.

2 Gradually add eggs, beating well. Fold in flour and ground almonds, and add almond essence and brandy.

3 Pour mixture into a well-greased and floured 20cm cake tin, and bake for 45 min, until a skewer comes out clean. Rest in the tin for 5 min, then cool on a wire rack.

4 For buttercream icing, beat together butter, yogurt, vanilla paste, almond essence and icing sugar until smooth. Spread over cake and decorate with almonds. Cut into 12 squares to serve.

Recipe by Nicola Millbank for Glenilen Farm's natural farmhouse yogurts and Milly's Real Food. For more recipes and info, visit glenilenfarm.com/recipes.



75p per serving

WIN £50 PUZZLE 4

Bitesize!

1	2	3	4
5			
6			
7			

ACROSS

- 1 Commotion
- 5 Outdoor swimming pool
- 6 Field, domain
- 7 Side or squad

DOWN

- 1 Strip of wood
- 2 Exhaust or wear out
- 3 Thought, inking
- 4 Meander

Read down the shaded squares for the prize answer. To enter, see p49.



I WANT ONE OF THESE...

Aldi Silicone Double Oven Glove, £6.99. These durable, silicone heat-proof gloves are a stylish and practical addition to your kitchen.

Pick Me Up! FOR LESS

£13.99 Echo Falls Summer Berries Vodka at Spar until 31/1/18 (normally £16)



Bag A Bargain

Heinz Soup of the Day, Sainsbury's

These new, fresh-tasting soups from Heinz come in six yummy flavours, such as Spiced Pumpkin, Sweet Potato & Carrot. Plus the convenient cartons don't need to be kept chilled.



£1.40

Chika's Snacks, Ocado, Holland & Barrett

Flavour-packed, gluten-free nutritious nibbles for an on-the-go protein kick. The range includes hand-toasted West African Peanuts, Plantain Chilli Crisps, and Chilli & Lime Cashews, all 100 per cent natural and totally delicious. Perfect!



£1.49

QUICK & EASY RECIPE



Chilli Pork Ramen

Serves: 2 Prep Time: 10 min Cook Time: 10 min

- 2 pork loin medallions
- 125g beansprouts
- 1L hot vegetable stock
- 2tsp hot chilli sauce
- 2.5cm ginger root, peeled and cut into thin matchsticks
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- Spray oil
- 1tbsp teriyaki sauce
- 125g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
- 1 carrot, sliced into thin strips
- 200g bok choy, sliced, or spinach
- 90g flat rice noodles
- To serve (optional):**
- 2 spring onions, thinly sliced
- Few sliced red chilli
- Few sprigs fresh coriander
- 2 wedges lime

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/Gas 4. Put pork medallions on a board between two sheets of clingfilm and bash all over until 1cm thick.

2 Put beansprouts in a sieve and carefully pour over boiling water. Refresh under cold water and set to one side.

3 Add stock to a large pan with chilli sauce, ginger and garlic. Bring to the boil and simmer for 5 min.

4 Heat a nonstick ovenproof pan and spray with a little oil, then cook pork for 3 min on one side. Turn medallions over, brush with teriyaki sauce and move pan to the oven for a further 6-8 min or until the juices run clear. Add vegetables and noodles to chilli broth and simmer for 4-5 min until tender.

5 Slice pork thinly. Divide noodles and veg between 2 bowls and ladle over broth. Top each with pork strips and beansprouts. Serve with spring onions, sliced chilli, coriander sprigs and a lime wedge. Serve immediately.

TOP TIP

To make a veggie-friendly option, you can replace the pork with some lightly fried or grilled tofu, as the rest of the broth is meat-free.

Find more recipes at: lovepork.co.uk

3 of the Best

Pick Me Up!
VALUE

We test 3 products so you don't have to. This week: **TOMATO AND BASIL SOUP**

1 Co-op Tomato & Basil Soup
This soup isn't as thick - and the tomato taste's not as intense - as some we tested, but a delicious flavour comes through from the basil.



2 Sainsbury's Tomato & Basil Soup

A really nice and chunky soup, with a good, robust flavour that's balanced and not too sharp.

3 Asda Tomato & Basil Soup
Thick and full-bodied, with a really rich tomato flavour, this one is filling and tasty. And very good value!



Make it yourself...

Serves: 2 Prep Time: 15 min Cook Time: 1 hr

- 650g cherry tomatoes
- 3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 2tbsp olive oil
- Salt and black pepper
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 stick of celery, chopped
- 2 medium carrots, chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 vegetable stock cube
- 45g pesto (optional)
- Handful fresh basil leaves

1tbsp olive oil and pinch of salt and pepper.

Cover loosely with foil and roast for about 45 min.

2 Heat remaining olive oil in a large pan. Cook onion, celery and carrots over a medium-low heat for 10-15 min, stirring occasionally. Scrape

tomatoes into the pan with the cooked veg, and add 500ml hot water, bay leaf and stock cube. Stir, bring to the boil and simmer for 20 min. Remove bay leaf and puree soup, adding more water if needed.

3 Ladle into bowls and top with pesto if using, and basil leaves to serve.



PLUS
How to whip up your own at home!

She's a cereal offender



Britain's

NAUGHTIEST DOG

Nothing's safe around Sally's pup



Sally Masson, 51, from Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire

Arriving home one day in September 2014, I let out a horrified gasp.

The place had been ransacked. Boots, clothes and food strewn across the floor, cushions slashed, with their stuffing spilling out.

We'd been burgled! 'What kind of sicko...?' I muttered, reaching for the phone to call my husband Stu, 48. Then I saw her – our

2-month-old labradoodle. Sitting on top of the kitchen counter, she stared with guilty puppy-dog eyes. 'Cookie!' I exclaimed. 'What have you done?!'

I should have known she was the culprit. It wasn't the first time, after all...

We'd got Cookie's mum, Custard, when she was also a pup.

When Custard gave birth to a litter of 10 and we met Cookie, our kids, Devon, 18, Jade, 16, and Finley 14,

agreed she was a keeper.

Compared to the other pups, she seemed cool as a cucumber, sitting at the back of the pen on her own.

She'd started small, munching our shoes, everything from trainers to Stu's work boots.

I've had to make a mad

dash to Tesco before the school run many mornings after she's destroyed Finley's shoes!

Then came raids on the kitchen cupboards.

And she once polished off a massive jar of Marmite, only to throw it up later.

And if anything ever goes missing?

'Check Cookie's Cave,' someone will shout.

It's our nickname for her bed, where all sorts of treasure can be found!

One look at her adorable face and it's hard to be angry with her.

Although my heart almost stopped when I saw she'd tried to chomp her way through a box containing a new £900 camera lens. I'm a photographer, but thankfully she didn't get beyond the packaging.

But while it sounds funny, there's a serious side



'Who, me..?'

to Cookie's chaos. She's eaten both paracetamol and some of Custard's antibiotics.

Ended up at the vet. It was worrying, but she was fine.

'Maybe she's seeking attention or gets separation anxiety?' Stu suggested.

'I don't know,' I said. 'But she's definitely getting worse.'

We'd leave her at home alone for no longer than four hours at a time. School-run time would be the worst, so now I take her with me.

But no matter how hard it gets, we never lose our temper with her – she's so cute, and anyway, she's just a dog.

We haven't taken her to a trainer or behaviourist – we don't feel we need to.

Now when I go out, I make sure all the doors are shut, there's nothing left out in the kitchen – and, most importantly, there's nothing that could harm Cookie.

I know some people think we haven't bothered training her, or we don't give her enough attention or exercise. But she gets more than enough of both.

Cookie just has a big personality and loves to make her presence known.

We wouldn't have her any other way.

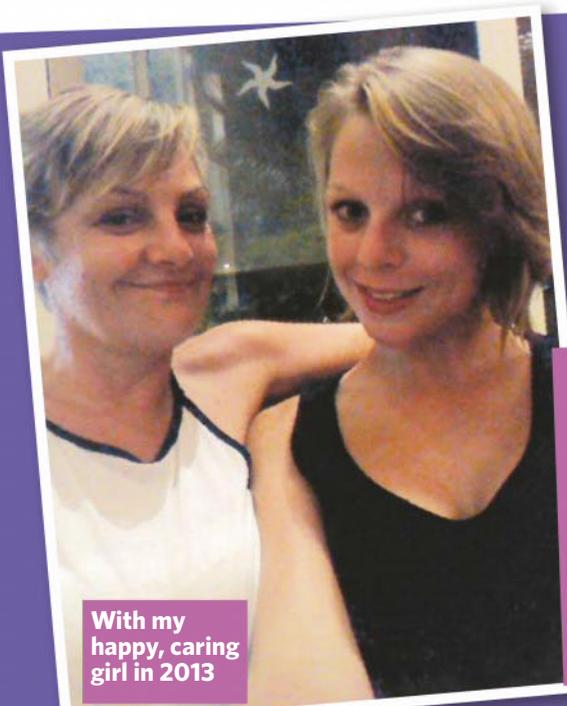
She started small - munching on our shoes...

How can I be cross?!



WORDS: MISHAAL KHAN, MOLLIE MANSFIELD. PHOTOS: CATERS NEWS AGENCY; SALLY MASSON PHOTOGRAPHY

KILLED By Her P



With my happy, caring girl in 2013

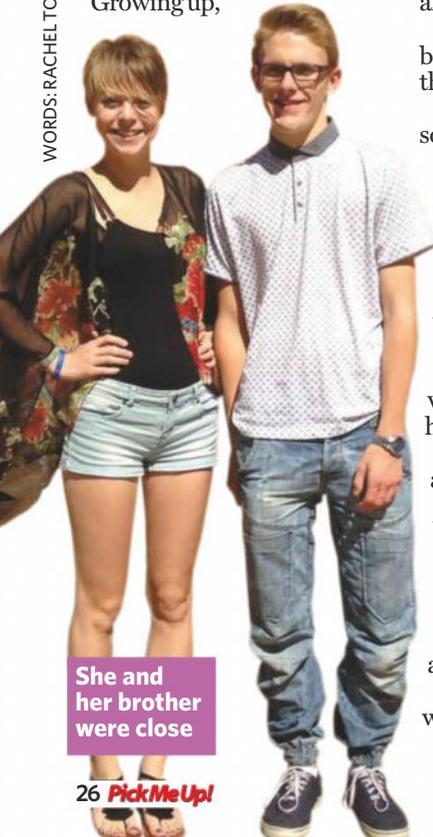
Amanda's daughter died so suddenly - aged just 20...



Amanda Parkes, 43, Stone, Staffordshire

With her dark-blonde hair and big blue eyes, my daughter Abbey was beautiful - inside and out.

I was so close to her and her brother Liam, as their dad passed when they were young. Growing up,



She and her brother were close

Abbey did ballroom dancing, and had a natural flair for Art.

As a teenager, she studied hard at college and got a job as a legal secretary.

Even when she left home and rented a house 13 miles away in Tunstall, we saw each other every week, texted and phoned constantly.

'Hope you're resting your back, Mamma Bear,' she'd say, always worrying about me.

In December 2015, her boyfriend, also called Liam, then 24, moved in with her.

I'd never seen Abbey so happy.

In hospital

Then, on the morning of 10 August 2016, Liam phoned sounding worried.

'I've brought Abbey to the hospital,' he said. 'She's in a lot of pain.'

It turned out that she'd woken up with pains in her side.

'She's having an ECG and a chest X-ray,' he explained.

Abbey felt nauseous, lightheaded, and also had swollen ankles.

Doctors thought it was a pulled muscle and sent her home that day with anti-inflammatories.

But next morning, she was worse, so she went to the GP. Suspecting an infection in



Abbey's fella Liam looked after her

her lower right lung, he prescribed antibiotics.

When I arrived at theirs later, Abbey was on the sofa in utter agony.

She broke down as I held her close and rocked her.

'You'll be on the mend soon,' I soothed, desperate to reassure her.

It broke my heart seeing her like that.

Bless him, Liam looked after my girl, and I texted loads, visited again at the weekend.

Only Abbey didn't seem any better when I returned

on the Thursday.

'You're really wheezy,' I fretted. 'I think you should go back to the GP.'

This time, she was given an inhaler and steroids, but the pain persisted.

Throughout, we kept in touch constantly.

Don't worry Mamma Bear, she'd text.

But, all the same, I was worried.

And it seems I had reason to be. On 26 August, eight days later, Liam phoned in a panic. 'Mandy! She can't breathe,'

She'd woken up with pains in her side and felt nauseous



HOW COULD MY BEAUTIFUL GIRL BE GONE...?

he said. 'I've just got home from work, the ambulance is here.'

A former healthcare assistant, I could hear the sound of a defibrillator in the background. I just knew it was bad.

Jumping into my car I raced over, talking out loud to Abbey as if she could hear me.

'I'm four minutes away,' I sobbed, willing her to make it. 'Hang on, I'm nearly there.'

When I pulled up I ran to the door, but the paramedics wouldn't let me inside.

I watched helplessly as they carried Abbey out on a stretcher, her skin blue, as they continued doing CPR.

Liam and I had to follow in another ambulance.

It didn't seem real as he told me Abbey had phoned him, saying she couldn't breathe.

He'd dialled 999 and raced home to find her slumped in the living-room chair, not

breathing, and unconscious.

As we sat in the ambulance, I phoned her brother Liam, then 18.

'Come straight to the hospital,' I told him.

There, it felt like a lifetime before the doctor had news...

As soon as I saw the tears in his eyes, I knew.

'We're sorry,' he said. 'We did everything we could but we couldn't bring her back.'

I broke down, overcome with despair, shock, and total disbelief.

My daughter was only 20, how could she be gone?

We were allowed to see Abbey, to hold her hand, and

stroke her hair as I'd done since she was a tiny baby,

and talk to her.

I spent hours with her as the rest of the family arrived to say their goodbyes.

Finding out why

When I eventually went

home, I was a broken woman.

But it wasn't until after her post-mortem the following week, that we found out what had killed our precious girl.

'Initial findings suggest the cause of death was a blood

clot on the lung,' the coroner's officer explained.

They'd found a massive one on her lower right lung, and two secondary clots on her left.

I was still in shock when

I watched helplessly as they carried her out on a stretcher

we held Abbey's funeral. A celebration of her life, we wore bright colours. And we played Abba's *Slipping Through My Fingers*, from the film *Mamma Mia!*

Afterwards, we brought her ashes home and kept them in the lounge.

Then, eight weeks after Abbey's death, we found out from the coroner she had a rare genetic condition called factor V Leiden.

It heightens the risk of developing a blood clot, especially when coupled with taking any contraceptive Pill that increases oestrogen levels.

Abbey had been taking the Pill since she was 14, when she'd been prescribed it for her mood swings.

Turns out the nausea, light-headedness and swollen ankles were all potential indicators of blood clots – but, because she was so young, no-one had suspected that.

I still talk about Abbey in the present – because, although she's not here in body, she's with me in every breath and thought.

Her death is such a waste, and every day I have to dig deep and battle the pain.

I'm telling Abbey's story to celebrate her life, to raise awareness about blood clots and to push for mandatory screening of factor V Leiden before anyone is prescribed hormone treatments.

Don't let my girl's death be in vain...

FACTOR V LEIDEN

- In Britain, just five per cent of people carry the genes from factor V Leiden, and many of those won't ever suffer from blood clotting.
- You're 35 times more likely to die of a blood clot if you have factor V Leiden.
- Amanda wants to make screening for the condition mandatory for anyone being prescribed hormone-related medication, or even screened at birth.

ETC etc etc...!

Did you know...?! (Random lists, facts and stuff to impress your mates...)

Architect Guy Mallinson, 51, has created a luxury tree house in Dorset - complete with a hot tub, sauna, a revolving fireplace, and even a slide into the forest.

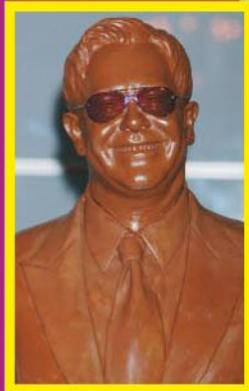
WHO'S THAT CELEB, YOU SAY?

■ This erm, unusual piece, titled *Michael Jackson and Bubbles*, is by artist Jeff Koons. It's so strange, we just can't take our eyes off it!



■ Who wouldn't be totally 'flat'-tered to appear on a pancake? This yummy portrait of Kylie Minogue is by food artist Prudence Staite.

■ An edible Elton John was created by Cadbury Dairy Milk, after he topped its nation's favourite personality poll.



■ Yup, it's the Duchess of Cambridge holding her baby, crafted by tree-stump artist Martin Sheppard.



Our Fave Witches From The Big And Small Screens



Sabrina from Sabrina the Teenage Witch



Samantha Stephens from Bewitched



Glinda the Good Witch from The Wizard of Oz



Professor Minerva McGonagall from the Harry Potter series

NO SEX, PLEASE...WE'RE SNUDDLING!



We all love a good cuddle, don't we? And now it seems some folk are paying up to £50 an hour to have someone cuddle them! A UK 'cuddle agency' currently has about 40 snugglers on its books, and hires around two more a week. Services are strictly non-sexual and clients are even invited to bring a fave pillow, blanket or teddy!

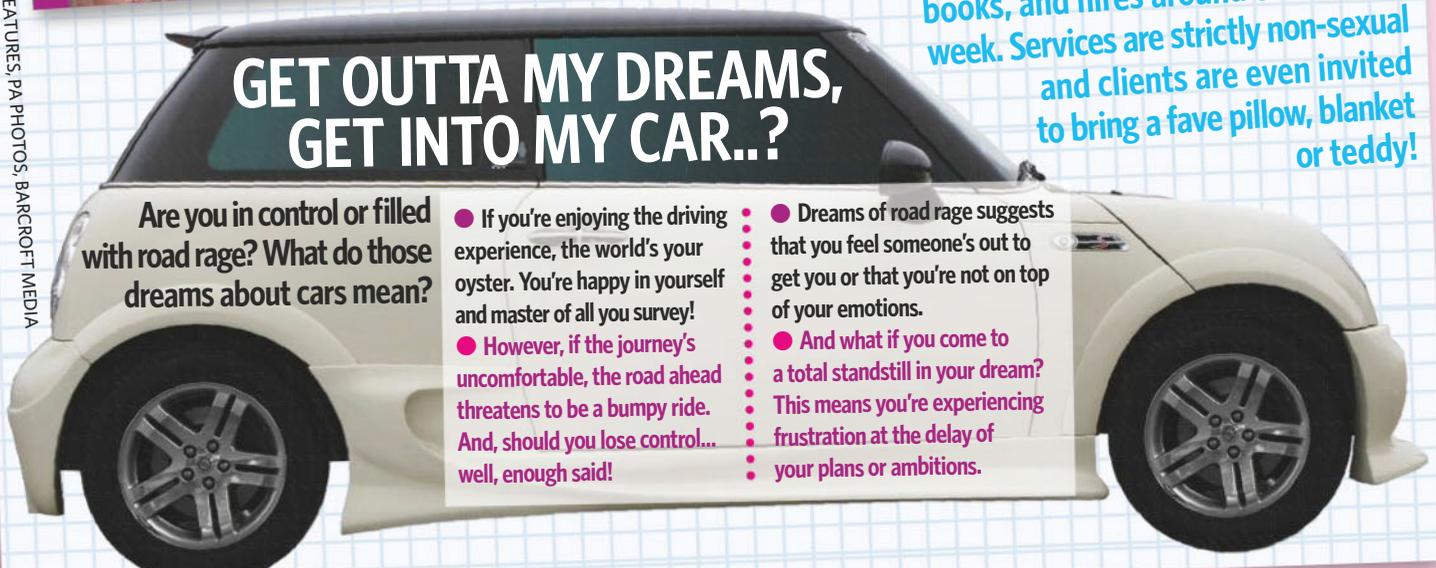
GET OUTTA MY DREAMS, GET INTO MY CAR..?

Are you in control or filled with road rage? What do those dreams about cars mean?

- If you're enjoying the driving experience, the world's your oyster. You're happy in yourself and master of all you survey!
- However, if the journey's uncomfortable, the road ahead threatens to be a bumpy ride. And, should you lose control... well, enough said!

- Dreams of road rage suggests that you feel someone's out to get you or that you're not on top of your emotions.
- And what if you come to a total standstill in your dream? This means you're experiencing frustration at the delay of your plans or ambitions.

WORDS: SARAH FINLEY; PHOTOS: ALAMY, REX FEATURES, PA PHOTOS, BARCROFT MEDIA



Pick Me Up! Bingo

33

47

61

11

LOOK AT OUR BIG WINS!

Surprised With £1,000!

Jill Jones, 52 Weston-super-Mare

I was nattering away with my pals, in the chatroom of the Pick Me Up! Bingo site.

I'd joined 10 years ago after seeing an ad for it online.

I'd had a few small wins but, for me, it was about having fun.

My favourite games are Double Bubble Jackpot – a slot game – and Tiki Bingo.

Last July, I prebought a few tickets for Tiki Bingo.

It meant the games would play and I could do errands.

I had a busy day and forgot about my games until a day or so later, when I logged on

to find £1,000 in my account! *Incredible!*

I had the biggest smile as I phoned my mum. She was speechless.

Then I told my husband Phil, 57, when he got home.

We decided to spend the money on a family trip.

My daughter, 22, had moved to Lynmouth and we were long overdue a visit.

'Let's spend the weekend with her,' I suggested.

So I paid for me, Phil and our son, 24, to go away to Lynmouth for the weekend.

We stayed in a lovely hotel and spent the weekend together as a family.

We enjoyed some nice lunches and meals out and I also treated the kids to a few bits and pieces.

We had a lovely time with them.

And I can't thank Pick Me Up! Bingo enough for making it all possible.

Creating special memories with my family really was priceless to me.



17

61

£3,000!

In Six Months!

Clare Foley, 39, West Glamorgan

I've played Pick Me Up! Bingo since March 2011 – and I've won three times!

My first big win came in December 2016, while my husband Peter, 40, was at work and I was at home with our kids aged 20, 18, and 14.

I was playing in Sapphire and needed one number...

Then I scooped £1,000! We bought the kids Xbox games and some clothes.

Then, just a month later, I won another grand – again playing Sapphire for fun.

I didn't ever expect to win again but, in June, I'd bought some tickets for Sapphire.

As the games were played, I pegged out washing and got

back to find I'd won £1,000!

Seeing Peter's face light up when I told him was brilliant.

We'd got a few friends' weddings coming up – so I bought a new dress, shoes and handbag and treated Peter and my son to a new suit.

Having the cash to treat ourselves really was lovely.

Just as lovely as it is to be a triple winner!



WORDS: CHER HEASMER

TURN FOR ANOTHER WINNER...

18+. UK only. Registration and deposit required. T&Cs apply.

1

4

GambleAware 18

*18+. UK only. Registration and deposit required. T&Cs apply. Visit www.gambleaware.co.uk **PickMeUp! 29**

Pick Me Up! Bingo

£3,333

Just Like That

47

1



Cherle's Top Tip:
Enjoy yourself! Pick Me Up! Bingo is all about having fun. You can set spending limits to be sure you don't go over budget. That way, you can have a good time!

Cherle treated all her family

Cherle Chaplin, 59, Nottingham

Our house was certainly a busy one. When my Cavalier King Charles spaniel Lucy gave birth in 2010, I had my hands full.

With seven pups to run around after, there was no rest.

'Are you sure you don't want to give some of them away?' my husband Tony, 60, asked.

'No way!' I replied.

I'd fallen in love with each and every one of them.

In between walking the dogs, playing fetch and feeding my furry brood, the only time that I got to myself was when they were all asleep.

To enjoy some 'me time', I found something fun to do that was quiet and wouldn't wake my sleeping pooches...

Pick Me Up! Bingo.

I'd seen a few ads for it and

WORDS: CHER HEASMER

BEING A MEMBER IS GREAT!

1 You'll get a brilliant welcome bonus when you make your first deposit! See right for details.

2 Pick Me Up! Bingo has a demo mode, so you can try most of the games for free before you spend any money.

3 You don't ever have to miss a Bingo game. Just buy your tickets in advance to play while you're out and about - it's so simple.

4 It's so convenient - you can play for cash prizes in the comfort of your own

home, or out and about on your smartphone. Whenever it suits you!

5 Watching the pennies? You can play games from just 1p and still be in with a chance of winning fantastic cash prizes.

6 There are fun chatrooms where you can make friends and have a natter or you can simply read along - it's just as much fun!

47

63

17

NOT A MEMBER YET?

PROMOTION

Get £35

To Play When You Deposit £10*

Bingo, Slots & More!

47

33

THAT'S 3,500 CHANCES TO WIN**

How to claim:

- 1 Visit pickmeupbingo.com
- 2 Enter promo code **PMUK3**
- 3 Deposit £10 and we'll top it up to £35*

*New customers only. Registration required. 18+. UK only. Offer in this issue ends 18 January 2018. Minimum £10 deposit. You must accept the welcome bonus and join using promo code PMUK3 when you deposit £10 to receive £25 welcome bonus to play. 250% welcome bonus - max £250. Welcome bonus must be wagered four times before withdrawals (including, but not limited to, any cash winnings or deposits related to the applicable bonus) from your member account. Wagering requirements apply. The welcome bonus will expire within 30 days if not used in its entirety. Cash-out restrictions apply. See full T&Cs at pickmeupbingo.com/terms. For 24-hour support, freephone 0800 458 0770. Play responsibly, Be GambleAware visit begambleaware.org. **3,500 chances to win based on 1p games.

thought it looked fun – and I wasn't disappointed. There were so many games to try.

I loved the slot game Double Bubble and Sapphire, which is a 90-ball bingo game.

Over the years, I won a little cash here and there. But mainly I played for fun and to pass the time while I looked after the dogs.

And I made so many friends in the chatrooms.

As the pups got older, I continued to play bingo every now and then and, last February, I bought a few tickets for Sapphire.

Tony was watching TV and the dogs were all asleep after a belly full of dinner.

Time to put my feet up.

I let the games play out, then I had a few games of Double Bubble.

It was only a few minutes later that I remembered my bingo tickets.

Wonder if I've won anything?

I thought, checking the games.

And there, on my screen, was a message saying: *Winner*.

When I looked at my balance

I realised that I'd won £3,333!

'Tony!' I cried. 'I've won!'

He looked at my computer screen and shook his head.

'Yeah, right!' he laughed.

I was in shock and kept checking over and over that

I hadn't made a mistake.

'Sure you weren't playing

a demo game?' Tony asked.

'Positive,' I replied.

He still didn't believe me.

It wasn't until a giant cheque arrived in the post a few days on that the penny finally dropped.

'You actually did win!' Tony laughed. 'Amazing!'

We were both so thrilled.

We'd been thinking of giving our garden a makeover, so we splashed out £1,000 to transform it. A new patio, flowers, trees...

It looked really smashing when it was finished.

We gave our kids – aged

36, 35 and 25 – and nine grandchildren a bit of cash each, too. Then I split the rest between myself and Tony.

'Treat yourself to something nice,' I told him.

I spent mine on stuff for the house and family meals out.

I enjoyed spending my win and sharing it with my family.

And our pampered pooches didn't go without, either.

I spoiled them with new toys and treats. It's a luxury dog's life for them, that's for sure.

And it's all thanks to Pick Me Up! Bingo.

I made friends in the chatrooms and played for fun

WIN A ROYAL WEEKEND & MORE!

Have you got perfect names for our new characters? Enter at pickmeupbingo.com for your chance to win an all-inclusive 2-night stay at a 5* country house!

Live like a Royal! *18+ UK only. Registration and opt-in required. Date restrictions and T&Cs apply. Max one prize draw entry.



FIVE STAR ALL THE WAY!

Simply enter your names from Tuesday 9 Jan (00.00) until Tuesday 16 Jan (23.59) for your chance to win a royal weekend and a Box Bonanza game.

JOIN NOW AT

pickmeupbingo.com

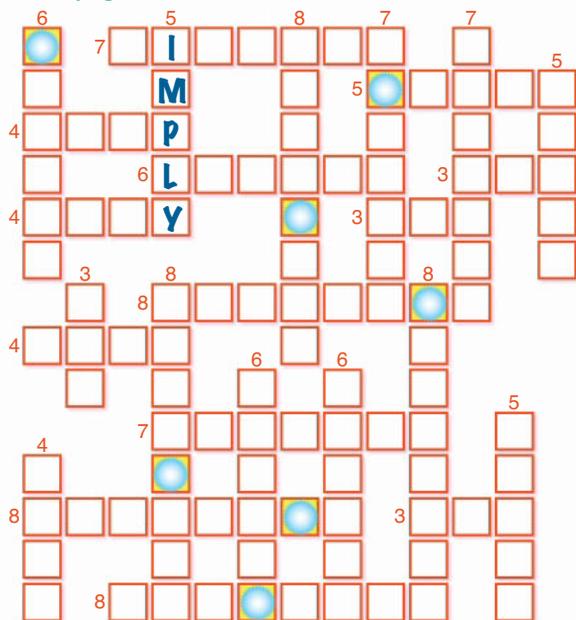
GambleAware **18**

PHOTO (NOT THE COUNTRY HOUSE IN PRIZE): GETTY IMAGES

WIN
PUZZLE 5

£25!
Cross It!

Solve the puzzle to find a word. Fit the words back in the grid and the letters in the highlighted squares spell out the answer. We've put in one word to help.
Enter on page 49.



3 letters	4 letters	5 letters	6 letters	7 letters	8 letters
Elm	Flea	Imply	Behest	Distaff	Although
Oik	Heap	Runny	Lychee	Ennoble	Betrayal
Sob	Spry	Stern	Ostler	Freesia	Sapphire
Use	Stew	Yokel	Smarmy	Postman	Stagnate
					Thriller
					Tranquil

WIN
PUZZLE 6

£25!
Sudoku!

To solve the puzzle, each 3 x 2 box, each column and each row must contain the numbers 1 to 6. Solve the puzzle, then read down the numbers in the highlighted squares for the prize answer.
Enter on page 49.

2				4	3
6	5		3		
		2		6	4
4	3				1

Total B

Itsy, bite-sy spider crawled up Courtney's leg...



Courtney Thompson,
19,
Crawley

monster beast had eight-legged it off somewhere.

'I'm not sleeping in here,' I gibbered. 'Knowing it's on the loose.'

So Mum and my boyfriend Mark, 22, turned my room upside down looking for it.

'It's gone love,' Mum said.

'It better have,' I humphed.

Thankfully I forgot about the creepy critter.

In fact, a week on, I had much more important things on my mind.

Namely, I was in agony!

'You remember that weird red mark on my ankle?' I said to Mum, hobbling into the kitchen.

She nodded.

A few days earlier, a red mark – like a

little fleabite – had appeared on my right ankle.

'Well, it's gone all swollen,' I said, showing her. 'It hurts.'

Straight to A&E

It was a morning last September, and I was meant to be going to my job as a nurse caring for disabled adults.

But it was so painful trying to walk that Mum insisted on taking me to the doctor.

Only they couldn't see me until a week later. By which time, the red mark had burst into an oozing hole, then scabbed over.

I thought the GP wouldn't be bothered.

But he took one look and sent me straight to A&E.

I was seen quickly.

'I think it's a spider bite,' the doctor said. 'It could be venomous.'

I thought back to that



Don't panic - that's just make-up!

ITE-MARE!



UGH! 2CM DEEP AND THE SIZE OF A 50P PIECE!



horrible spider. *Had it been hiding in my room all this time and bitten me as I slept?*

I shuddered at the thought.

They told me the hole was 2cm deep – and as big as a 50p piece in size.

They had to scrape away the scab in order to inject antibiotics into the middle of it.

They then dressed it to draw the venom out.

‘Good job you came when you did,’ a doctor told me.

‘Why?’ I’d asked, scared of the answer.

‘It could have affected your whole leg and got infected,’ he said.

Scary!

He was right. When I got home I looked it up on the Internet.

I’d thought venomous spiders were just abroad, but you can encounter them in the UK, too.

And I lived in Crawley – appropriately enough!

My bite was so bad, I had

to return to hospital every two days to get it re-dressed.

Is this another one of your crazy creations? a friend commented on Facebook when I posted a picture of my wound.

See, I’d studied Make-up at college and was always posting pictures of my gory SFX

make-up scars.

At least it gave me some inspiration!

I hobbled around for the next couple of weeks. Then they had to draw out the pus.

They dressed my wound each time with a special chemical bandage. Then they’d dig into the hole to clear it out.

That was the worst part.

I thought I had a high pain threshold... When I was younger

Britain's Most-feared

False widow spiders (see photo) have been spotted across the UK, but most often in southern England. Medium-sized, they have brown bodies with orange legs and cream markings. Their venom can cause minor swelling and nausea. If the bite gets infected, it can lead to a gangrene-like infection.

I’d had a double hip surgery. But this was something else.

Lasting terror

Once the pus had been drawn out, they then had to try to fix the wound.

It was now just a massive hole in my ankle.

They packed the middle of it with gauze to help my body repair itself. But I still had to go back for regular checkups.

Three months on, and the wound has healed.

But I’ll always have a scar.

It’s made my arachnophobia worse. Now, even if I see a small spider, I scream.

I can’t believe I had a venomous spider scuttling around my bedroom.

It still sends shivers down my spine.



ETC etc etc..!

Did you know..?! (Random lists, facts and stuff to impress your mates...)

Slovakian Antonia Kozakova owns an incredible 80,000 napkins - a Guinness World Record. And they're worth more than £300,000!

Why It's Fab Being 50-something!



- 1 You're treated like a grown-up at the doctor's surgery/in the bank/that posh shop or restaurant you never used to dare go in.
- 2 You can proudly say you were alive when England won the World Cup, the UK went decimal and man first walked on the moon.
- 3 You feel entitled to tell off teenage boys for putting their feet on the seats on trains.
- 4 You've learnt to say 'no, thanks' without feeling guilty or making excuses.

4 EMBARRASSING THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED TO US ALL

● TEARING OUR TROUSERS

Our skinny jeans are just a little er, snug. But, when we bend down to pick something up...ri-i-p. Awks!



● UNCOMFORTABLE HELLOS

We're introduced to someone new. We stick out our hand for a nice, formal handshake, just as they go in for a hug and a cheek kiss - so we unintentionally grope their boob. Or we end up in a weird, hand-holding kiss-hug.



● LOO HELLO!

We're in the toilet, but there's no lock, or we forget to use it. Then someone walks in just as we're mid flow! Argh!

● CAUGHT STALKING

We're 'browsing' our new boyf's ex on Facebook and, as we scroll, we accidentally hit 'like' on one of their photos. From five years ago.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES, REX/SHUTTERSTOCK, ALAMY

Guess The Movie From The Scene...?



ANSWERS (clockwise from top left): Ghost, Hook, A Room with a View, Dirty Dancing

Signs You've Had A Past Life



Got a phobia of something, with no logical explanation for it? It could be that it's an unconscious memory from a past life. For example, fear of a certain number could relate to a tragic anniversary in a previous existence.

Vivid dreams or nightmares that recur and linger in the memory after waking may actually be replayed scenes of a past life. These dreams are likely to begin and end at the same point - and the sequence of events will stay the same each time you have the dream.



Make Me Up!

Our Jess helps you get gorgeous!

TRIED & TESTED

This week: Lip balm

1 Blistex MedPlus Lip Repair, £2.30, Asda

Of all the lip balms I've tried over the years, I've yet to find anything that works quite as well as this. Instead of slathering it on all day long, just one application before bed is enough to keep my lips nice and soft.



2 Carmex Original Moisturising Lip Balm, £2.69, Boots

It's not for everyone, but I love the super-sticky texture and tingly menthol feel of this balm. It has serious staying power, with one application lasting for hours.

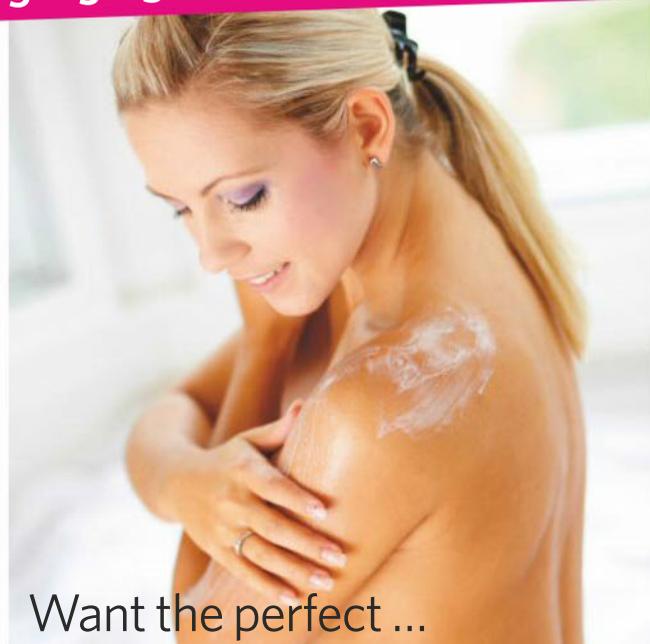


3 Limited Edition Vaseline Lip Therapy Mirror Mirror, £3, Tesco

Vaseline's original balm has been given a fairy-tale makeover with a brand-new tin and formula. I love the wintery, spiced apple scent and faint red tint - perfect for adding a pop of daytime colour to your pout.



Our Fave!



Want the perfect ...

DRY SKIN FIX?

Try one of these...

Sanctuary Spa Wet Skin Moisture Miracle

£8
Boots

Much speedier and more quickly absorbed than a traditional body lotion, this super-light, in-shower moisturiser is a must for busy days. Apply it to wet skin after washing, before towel drying as normal.



My Trusty Sunflower Face & Body Oil

£7.99
Superdrug

Designed by skincare experts in the NHS to tackle scarring, this ultra-nourishing oil works wonders on dry skin. A little goes a long way, so one bottle will last for ages.



Child's Farm Moisturiser

£3.99
Boots

Don't be put off by the packaging - it's not just for kids! This moisturiser's fast becoming a cult beauty buy. The fresh, unisex grapefruit scent is great for all ages. Applied once or twice a day, it helps to combat eczema and dry skin.



ASK JESS

Q Help! My hair's thinning more and more the older I get, and the strands seem thinner, too. What can I do to stop it?

Mia Roberts, 52, Leeds



A Roots Hair Growth Double Effect Conditioner, £9.99,

Superdrug, has been specially designed to stop hair loss in men and women. Containing Procapil, which works to help rejuvenate the hair follicle, its makers claim it should stimulate stronger, thicker hair growth in a few weeks.

Jess' Beauty Hero

I love Beauty Kitchen Seahorse Plankton 60 Second Manicure, £14.99, Holland & Barrett. Used once a week, it exfoliates and moisturises hands and nails brilliantly.



READER'S TIP

When dying hair at home, stay within two shades of your natural colour. It helps prevent any mishaps or dye disasters!

Sarah Ingham, 18, Stoke-on-Trent

Pick Me Up! FOR LESS

£39.99
at The Perfume Shop (normally £54) until 17/1/18



Shape Me Up!

Flattering Fashion



£28
JD Williams

Sleek, wide-leg jeans in a dark wash, such as these, will skim over your thighs to give the illusion of longer, leaner pins.

Pick Me Up!
FOR LESS



HALF-PRICE
at Superdrug
All products in its
Some Body range
until 30/1/18



4st

LOST!



THE SECRET OF MY SUCCESS

NAME: Emma Davey, 45, Surrey.

VITAL STATISTICS: During my first pregnancy, I took advantage of being able to eat for two and the weight piled on. I slimmed down before having my second baby but, soon after she was born, I tipped the scales at 14st 7lb and wore a size-18.

MY MOTIVATION: The turning point came when I saw a photo of myself at my father-in-law's 80th birthday party. I tended to avoid mirrors, so I was shocked to see just how much weight I'd gained.

MY ACTION PLAN: Determined to turn my life around, I signed up to the LighterLife Total VLCD plan, replacing conventional food with four LighterLife products a day. Although that helped kickstart my journey, it was the group support that made all the difference. Using cognitive behaviour therapy, my LighterLife counsellor Hazel helped me get to the root of my bad eating habits.

LOOK AT ME NOW: At 10st 5lb and a size-10, I feel better than ever. I've learnt my pitfalls and am confident that I can be a role model for my children. Diets alone don't work, but I'm proof that LighterLife does.

● lighterlife.com

Try this....

Ape Lightly Salted Crispy Coconut Curls, 99p, Asda

Coconuts are packed with vitamin D, - so these crisps will help support your immune system. What a virtuous snack!



Atkins Harvest Bars, £1.85 each, Superdrug
Available in three delicious flavours - Apricot Almond & Coconut, Mixed Nuts & Chocolate and Dark Chocolate Sea Salt Caramel - these bars are gluten-free and low in carbs.

Get Moving!



George at Asda has launched a brand-new Fitness Watch, £18, helping you track your progress as you chase your January health goals. As well as measuring your calories, steps and sleep, it also alerts you if you've been stationary for too long and reminds you to drink more water.

Food Swaps



Swap
PATAK'S KORMA SAUCE...
145 CAL
PER 100g



For
PATAK'S TIKKA MASALA SAUCE...
81 CAL PER
100g

Save **64 CAL**

Take 3...



Tesco Pepperoni Pizza Bakes...
349 cal per bake

Tesco Cheese & Onion Bakes...
365 cal per bake

Tesco Creamy Chicken Bakes...
403 cal per bake



Luna was nine weeks early



Now she never stops smiling!

Hang On In There, **BABY**

Beth's worst nightmare turned into a miracle



Beth Trenerry, 32, from Consett, County Durham

The Florida sunshine was beating through the window, but I had goose pimples. Squeaking with excitement, I poked my head around the bathroom door. 'I'm pregnant!' I grinned at my husband Neil, 37. It was June 2016 and we were holidaying in Orlando. Something to look forward to after the agony of losing our first-born, Baby T, just four months earlier. She'd been born 12 weeks premature, lived just a few hours. *Heartbreaking.* But now a new life was growing inside me. Awesome news. But nerve-racking too. After my first pregnancy, doctors had discovered I had a weak cervix. So this time, I'd need a stitch in my cervix to

prevent me from having another premature labour. But, as I recovered from the op, I had the results of tests carried out a few days earlier. 'You're having a girl,' I was told. 'But there's a 99.9 per cent chance she has Down's syndrome.'

I was shocked. I'd been so worried about a premature labour that the risk of Down's syndrome hadn't entered my head.

I won't lie. At first, Neil and I were devastated.

After everything we'd been through, why was this happening to us?

Talking for hours, though, one thing became clear.

Neil put it perfectly. 'She's

our daughter,' he said. 'We'll love her just the same.'

I nodded.

'She's ours,' I said.

We'd be there for her whatever might happen.

But I had to get her through this pregnancy first.

'Just hang on in there,' I willed her.

Two months before my due date, I woke with terrible stomach pains.

'I think the baby's coming,' I told Neil.

I was terrified, sobbing.

What if we lost her, like her sister?

I was terrified. What if we lost her, like her sister?

I was rushed to the hospital and the stitch in my cervix was removed.

My labour was in full swing, everything happening so quickly.

Then, at 11.30am, our little Luna was born, nine weeks early, weighing 3lb 1oz. Neil cut the cord and I cuddled her, never wanting to let go.

I didn't care that

my girl had Down's syndrome. She was mine. At last.

'Mummy loves you so much,' I sobbed.

Despite being born so early, with a small hole in her heart, Luna was a tough little cookie.

She was kept in for six weeks, Neil and I visiting every day.

Then, eventually, on 7 February 2017, it was time to take our little girl home.

It was so special.

When we'd left hospital, heartbroken the year before, without Baby T, we'd been given a memory box with her footprints, seeds to plant and the little tags she'd have worn if she'd survived.

But now I had a beautiful newborn in my arms.

Back home, we've planted Baby T's seeds in a pot in the garden.

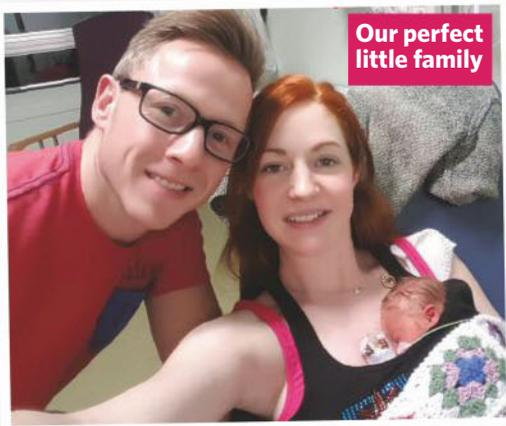
We've also got a cushion with the words *Born in 2016*, with both *Luna* and *Baby T* embroidered on the back.

We'll be sure to tell Luna all about her sister.

Luna is such a delight. She never stops smiling and absolutely rules the roost.

I couldn't be happier.

Luna put light in my life just when I needed her most.



Our perfect little family

Honeytrap KILLERS

They played a twisted game, luring their love-struck victims into deadly traps...



MEXICO - DATING-APP TRICK

O'Neil McGean shook with grief outside the funeral home. It was April 2010.

His ex Brian Betts, 42, who he'd dated for 10 years, was gone.

They'd remained close after their break-up, although Brian had moved to Maryland and O'Neil to Mazatlan, Mexico.

But then Brian was robbed and shot by a gang of teens who'd set him up by using a dating hotline.

His killer was jailed for 40 years, and O'Neil vowed to be wary of online dating.

Yet, by October 2016, his caution had faded and he went to a hotel to meet a man he'd met through a dating app.

But he, and \$16,000 (around £12,000) from his bank account,

then vanished.

Then O'Neil's business partner began getting ransom demands via text – from O'Neil's phone.

Demanding \$26,000 (around £20,000) – or O'Neil would die.

After a few days, the kidnappers went quiet.

That November, the police found O'Neil's body – and arrested his business partner.

It emerged that O'Neil, 53, had been lured to another hotel and beaten to death.

His body was wrapped in a curtain and buried under freshly poured concrete.

Police thought that his

business partner and three others had lured O'Neil into a kidnap plot.

However, they messed up by beating him so badly, his lungs punctured and he died.

The business partner and two other men were charged, another went on the run.

O'Neil's business partner denies involvement and claims he's a 'scapegoat'.

And, with Mexico's corrupt criminal justice system, O'Neil's family fear that they will never get justice.

In that country, around 93 per cent of homicides go unsolved.

The only tragic fact they know for sure is that the love of O'Neil's life was lured into a deadly trap – and then, six years later, so was he.

O'Neil, and \$16,000 from his account, vanished

Both dead: Brian and O'Neil

USA - YOUNG

Unbeknown to him, Seath Jackson, 15, was at the centre of a lethal love triangle.

Ex-girlfriend Amber Wright, also 15, wanted to date Michael Bargo, now 23.

She said Seath cheated on her, nearly gave her an STI.

In April 2011, Bargo convinced Wright to act as bait, luring Seath to a friend's mobile home – and his cruel end.

On arrival, Seath was jumped by Bargo and three others. They broke his knees,

UK - LOVE-R

In July 2008, Shakilus Townsend, 16, was like any ordinary teenager – smitten with a girl.

Except Samantha Joseph, 15, wasn't interested.

She was obsessed with her ex, Danny McLean, 18.

Joseph was dumped by McLean as he was jealous of her friendship with Shakilus.

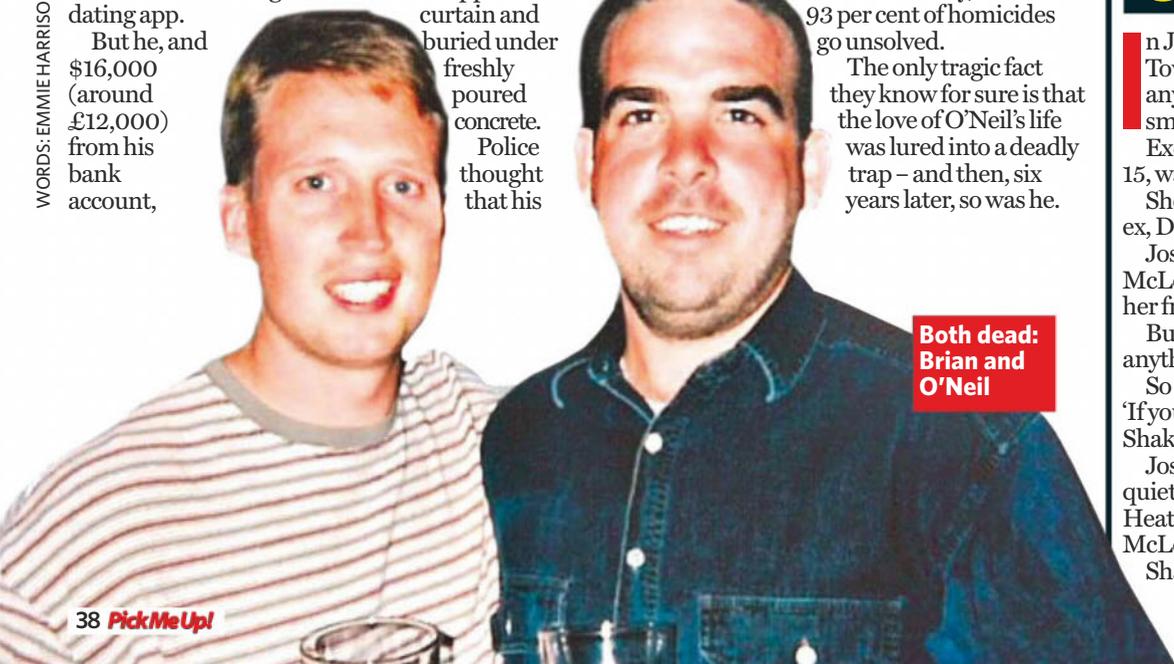
But she was willing to do anything to win him back.

So when McLean asked, 'If you love me, will you set up Shak?' she agreed.

Joseph led Shakilus to a quiet cul-de-sac in Thornton Heath, south London, where McLean and others waited.

Shakilus was seen on CCTV

WORDS: EMMIE HARRISON. PHOTOS: PA, REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

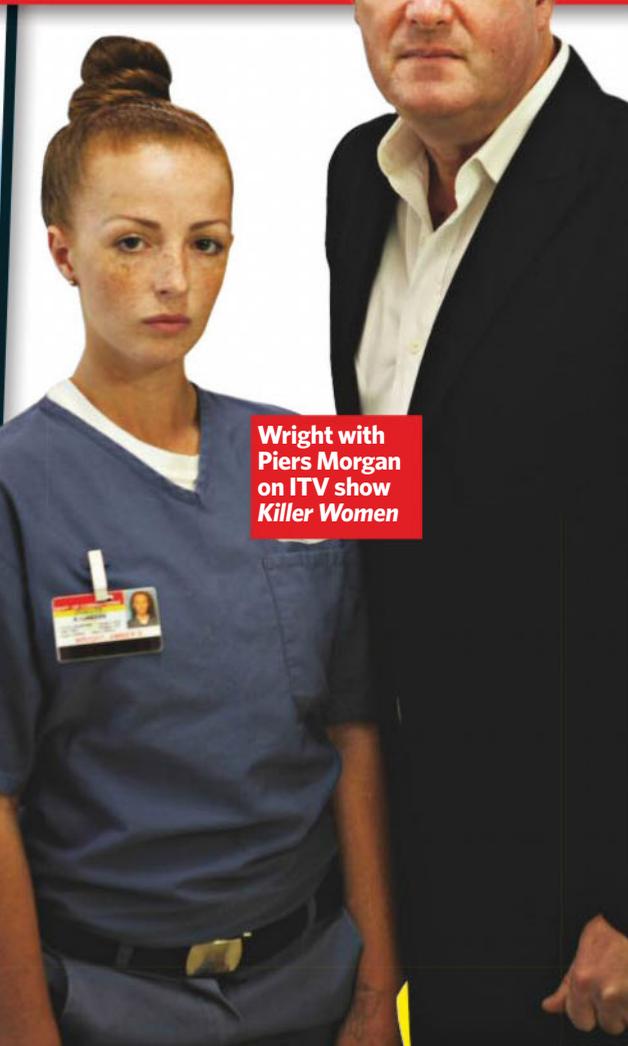




WORLD OF CRIME



Guilty: Wright and Bargo



Wright with Piers Morgan on ITV show *Killer Women*

GEST ON DEATH ROW

tortured him and stuffed him in a sleeping bag - while Wright watched.

Seath was then shot, his body burned and broken up. His remains were put in paint tins and thrown in a quarry.

Gunman Bargo was convicted of first-degree murder in January 2017.

At the time, he was the youngest person on Florida's death row. Judge Eddy

said it was 'the most cold, calculated, premeditated case of murder' he'd seen.

Wright's step-brother Kyle Hooper, 21, Justin Soto, 25, and Charlie Ely, 23, were also given life sentences for first-degree murder.

Girlfriend Wright was found guilty of the same in February 2016, and given a life sentence for review after 25 years.

They broke his knees and tortured him

RIVAL REVENGE



DANNY MCLEAN



SAMANTHA JOSEPH

following Joseph onto a bus, thinking he was visiting her cousin. Instead, he was caught in a honeytrap, ambushed by McLean and his gang.

The masked and hooded gang

beat Shakilus with baseball bats before stabbing him.

McLean plunged his knife into Shakilus' chest, raked it across his liver, twisting it.

Shakilus cried for his mother,

shouting, 'I don't want to die.'

Joseph just laughed, walking away as the boy was attacked.

Shakilus bled to death alone.

At the Old Bailey, Joseph, McLean and five others were found guilty of murder and handed life sentences.

Joseph was told to serve a minimum of 10 years, McLean 15 years and the others were given between 12 and 15 each.

In court, Shakilus' mother, Nicola Dyer, 34, said, 'I may forgive them one day, but not today.'



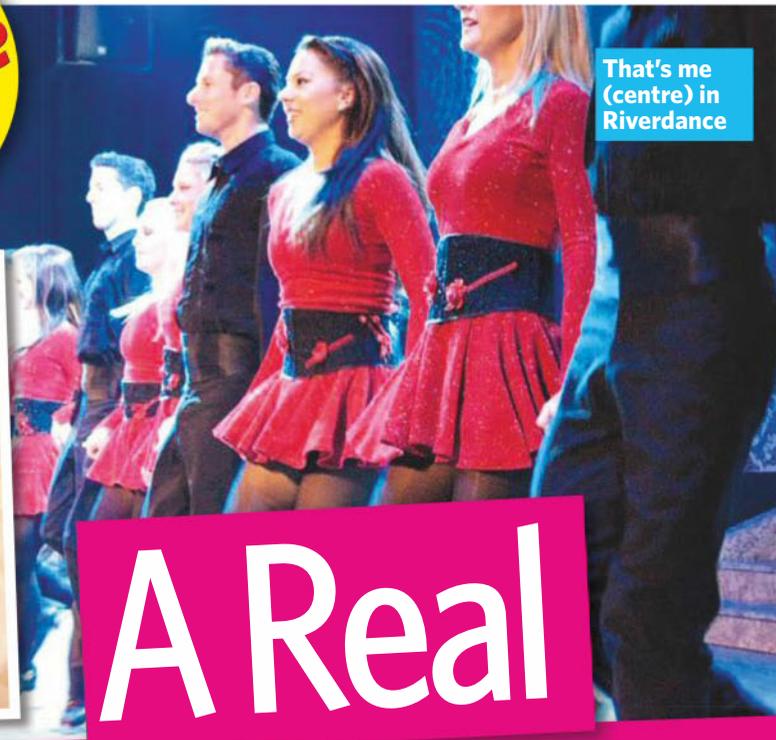
McLean and Joseph after the attack on Shakilus (right)



**Little
Pick Me
Ups!**



Elena on the way!



That's me (centre) in Riverdance

A Real

BELLY DANCER!

Christina toured the world with a bun in the oven



Christina Woods, 33, Newtownabbey, Antrim

Peeking inside the empty stadium in June 2011, I felt a rush of nausea.

Not nerves – I'd been a dancer since I was 3. Toured worldwide since I was 20!

This time, it was morning sickness.

I was around 8 weeks pregnant,

and so excited!

I was engaged to Steve, now 36, one of the sound engineers.

We'd fallen in love in 2008, on the US tour of the of *Riverdance*, which had become a world-famous entertainment phenomenon.

We both worked on eight shows a week, for sometimes nine months at a time.

Steve and I got engaged in New York in March 2010, getting married that August.

We spent our lives touring America, Canada and Europe. Grew stronger and closer as a couple.

I knew Steve was my soulmate.

But performing while I was expecting was a challenge.

Luckily, I didn't show in my costume

and the audience didn't suspect a thing...

At three months pregnant, I quit touring with the *Riverdance* show.

I had a baby boy, Conor, and when he was a year old, in 2012, I set up my own Irish Dance School, ReelRobics.

We went on to have two girls, Eva, now 4, and Elena, 7 months.

I performed and taught at my school throughout both of those pregnancies – even at eight-and-a-half months pregnant with Elena!

I just felt healthier, fitter. Now, both Conor, who is 6, and Eva have the bug. They are in my dance school, dancing circles around me!

From touring with *Riverdance*, I met my life partner.

And made a family.

I know I'm lucky. In fact, you could say it's the luck of the Irish dance!

Still dancing!



I didn't show - the audience didn't suspect a thing

Meet the family...



WORDS: EMMIE HARRISON, JADE BECROFT, MOLLIE TRACEY, ANIESA MIRREH
PHOTOS: BELFAST NEWS AND FEATURES, CATERS NEWS AGENCY

Meat CHAMP

Elsie's vying to be Britain's next top butcher!



Elsie Yardley, 23, Braintree, Essex

With my long blonde hair and high heels, you'd never guess what I did for a living.

Don't let my girly front fool you – I'm on track to be Britain's next top butcher!

I'd started as a Saturday girl

Truck

Amy's in it for the long haul



Amy Morris, 23, Stone, Staffordshire

You never forget your childhood sweetheart. Especially not me, I married mine!

I met Chris, now 23, at school in 2009. We were both 15 and madly in love.

So when he popped the

t The PION!

Short but sweet REAL LIFE



I've really made the cut!

while studying Art at college.

Cutting up meat felt strangely creative.

I loved cooking, too.

As for blood and guts, it never bothered me.

At 16, I was offered a full-time job in the butcher's.

'Are you sure it's what you want to do?' my mum Elaine, 55, asked, thinking it would be a big mis-steak!

But I was 100 per cent

certain. I loved Art, but what job would I get from it?

'Means I get great meat!' Dad Kevin, 61, joked.

Butchery was hands-on – I'd organise window displays, make sales, chat with locals... as well as break up carcasses and wrap up beautifully cut meat!

I studied at one of the three butchery colleges in the UK for three years.

You could say it's almost

like a meat university!

Then last May, I entered the Premier Young Butcher of the Year competition.

You get marked on six categories, including window display, cleanliness and carving.

I won three medals! Didn't just *meat* expectations, I exceeded them.

Next I'm determined to win Best Young Butcher overall.

Sometimes butchery can be

a hard job, especially when you're female.

It's difficult trying to carve a huge carcass of beef. I'm too small to carry it – I have to string it up like a punchbag!

I'm left-handed, too, so I have to do everything opposite to my boss.

One day, I'd love to own and run a shop.

And prove that young girls can do anything!

y In LOVE!

question on my birthday in October 2014, I said yes.

I had fond memories of my parents' wedding in 1998.

They weren't exactly traditional – obvious from the huge pick-up truck they hired to take them to church!

I remember being 3 and perching in the driver's seat, bewildered at the size of it!

'Wouldn't it be lovely if we had it too?' I said to Chris.

It took a long time to sway him. So long that when my dad Shawn, now 45, tried to arrange it, he said it was unavailable.

'It would never fit down the

road, anyway,' he soothed.

I was gutted, but had other things to worry about.

Except, on my big day, on 5 August last year, I was halfway through my make-up when...

Honk! A monster truck pulled up outside my house. The same one my mum Tina, now 44, and dad had, but with a new paint job.

My dad winked at me.

The fibber!

And to think I was going to slum it in a car!

All the company asked for was a charity donation.

Safe to say, I had a wheely awesome day.

Our big day – and big truck!



Style Me Up!

Curvissa



TIP

It's worth paying a little more for well-fitting lingerie



Click today: curvissa.co.uk

Kaleidoscope



Click today: kaleidoscope.co.uk

Simply Be



Click today: simplybe.co.uk

George at Asda



Click today: george.com

Index



Click today: index.com

Primark



Click today: primark.com

TIP

Soft triangle bras are great for smaller busts

Debenhams



Click today: debenhams.com

Marks & Spencer



TIP

High-waisted briefs will flatter your figure!



Click today: marksandspencer.com

This week...
Lingerie

Treat yourself to a glam new
sleep set...



PickMeUp! Loves...
 ...long-line bralets!
 The extra lace on this one is so pretty!

**Bralet, £12.99,
 and briefs,
 £5.99**
 New Look

New Look



Click today: newlook.com

F&F at Tesco



Click today: tesco.com



**Top,
 £18, and
 bottoms,
 £18**
 Topshop



**£28
 for set**
 Topshop



**Top, £20,
 and bottoms,
 £18.50**
 Nine by Savannah
 Miller at Debenhams



**Top, £19.50,
 and bottoms,
 £17.50**
 B By Ted Baker
 at Debenhams



11-17 January 2018

Your Stars!

7 days of hope & happiness with Claire Petulengro

ARIES

21 March-20 April

If you keep doing things in the same way that you've always done them, you'll never move ahead. You yearn for change, yet you allow others to dictate what you should do. Use the forward-thinking skills Saturn's giving you this week to take control.

Call: 09058 170 710*

TAURUS

21 April-21 May

Jealousy seems to be evident in your chart right now - and you've really no reason to be! So, instead of fretting, take a step back and look at the bigger picture. There's so much to be gained by simply going with the flow and trusting others.

Call: 09058 170 711*

GEMINI

22 May-21 June

You don't seem to be feeling as confident about your future as you were at the end of the year. It's been a slower start than you'd hoped for, but things can and will get off the ground - if you just remember to persevere. Invites that require travel prove inspirational.

Call: 09058 170 712*

CANCER

22 June-23 July

If you can feel good about who you are and what you're doing, Cancer, then others will find it easy to have confidence in you. You finally start to come out of an addictive phase, and it's a great week to start resolutions towards living a better and healthier life.

Call: 09058 170 713*

LEO

24 July-23 Aug

You're one of a kind, Leo, and you should celebrate your individuality. In order to help yourself, you must be yourself. That's what'll attract like-minded friends, and even lovers. A cancelled work arrangement brings an epiphany about what you really need professionally.

Call: 09058 170 714*

VIRGO

24 Aug-23 Sept

Self-respect leads to self-discipline. You, of all signs, should know how important it is to stay true to yourself. Don't be led astray this weekend by those who you know could only ever be a temporary - never a permanent - part of your life. You're better than that!

Call: 09058 170 715*

LIBRA

24 Sept-23 Oct

This week, you could well be tempted to tell a small lie to loved ones, in order to get your own way. Don't give too much detail or you'll make yourself look a fool. Your face is giving away more than you realise! Phone calls right now can change everything...

Call: 09058 170 716*

SCORPIO

24 Oct-22 Nov

What are you waiting for, Scorpio? Life's for living and you're the sign who knows how to live it to the full. You may feel a little burned by events that have taken place recently. However, it's time to pick yourself up, dust yourself off and carry on. Ready?

Call: 09058 170 717*

SAGITTARIUS

23 Nov-21 Dec

You've not been thinking straight, but you will from this week forward. In fact, you'll know who you want to spend more time with and who you want to avoid. A more passionate archer is emerging and this changes everything about where you see this year going.

Call: 09058 170 718*

CAPRICORN

22 Dec-20 Jan

Don't agree to things you know you won't enjoy just to impress others. They won't respect you for pretending to be someone you're not, they'll only feel irritated. Being the individual you are is what makes you such fun to be around. Acknowledge this.

Call: 09058 170 719*

AQUARIUS

21 Jan-19 Feb

Try not to allow yourself to be bullied into things you don't really want to do. It would be far better for you to put your time and effort into your own dreams and ambitions. Thursday and Friday are especially lucky for sorting out financial affairs to your advantage.

Call: 09058 170 720*

PISCES

20 Feb-20 March

This is a really good week to negotiate and make your life a more comfortable place to be. For too long, you were trying to fit in with others needs and desires and none of your own. This all changes from Friday onwards. Chance encounters stir your heart.

Call: 09058 170 721*

*Starlines updated every Thursday. Calls cost 80p per min plus your telephone company's network access charge and last approx 4 mins. Callers must be 18+. You must have payer's permission. SP: Spoke 0333 202 3390.

In next week's
Pick Me Up!

Me And Mum

PREGGERS

TOGETHER!



Mate Sliced

MY FACE OPEN



Reunited With

DADDY IN

HEAVEN



On Sale
Thursday
18 Jan

PHOTOS: NORTH NEWS & PICTURES/SWNS/FIONA LOCKE

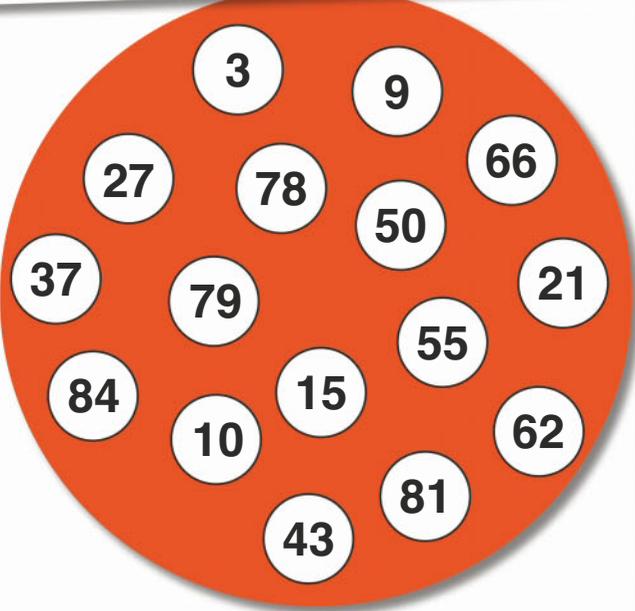
WIN £100!

PUZZLE 7

Strike It!

On your bingo card, cross out all the numbers that appear on the balls. Read the letters beside the remaining numbers on your card from left to right to spell out your answer word. To enter, complete the coupon on page 49.

	D		C	A		A		L
	12		31	48		62		79
T		U			D	I		R
	3	15	26		50	68		84
E			N		T		O	N
	8		37		57		71	90



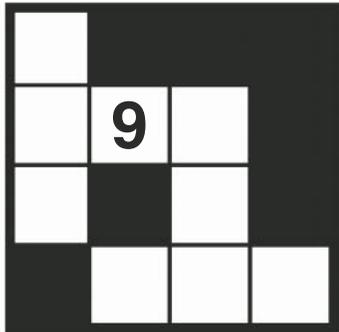
WIN £25!

PUZZLE 8

Number Fit!

Which one of the listed numbers won't fit in this mini grid? Enter on p49.

- 296
- 653
- 395
- 932
- 526



Time To

MY L

Sebastian faced a battle, but he wouldn't be beaten...



Sebastian Probert-Broster, 31,
Haywards Heath

Waking up with an achy head, I cursed myself. 'This is the hangover from hell,' I groaned, my temples throbbing. It was May 2013...I'd been on a mad night out with a friend.

And, boy, was I paying for it now! The next day, my hangover was still lingering. Plus, I had a sore throat and felt really run down.

A week later, I still wasn't well. Then lumps started to appear on my scalp.

My GP diagnosed cellulitis – a bacterial skin infection – and I was given antibiotics.

Only, a few days later, when I walked into my office where I worked as a finance advisor, I was out of breath, had sweat dripping down my face.

'You been for a run?' my mate mocked.

Three flights of stairs had worn me out. I knew it wasn't normal. And when I found a lump in

my neck shortly after, in June, I went to A&E at Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath.

Tests and scans revealed something frightening...

'One of your lymph nodes has exploded and mutated,' a doctor said.

It was pressing against my windpipe, that's why I could barely breathe.

Just days later, I had surgery to remove it.

Survival mode

My follow-up was a week on.

I assumed doctors would give me the all-clear. Instead...

'I'm so sorry, you've got a form of blood cancer called non-Hodgkin lymphoma,' the consultant told me.

The word 'cancer' echoed in my head. I couldn't believe my ears.

Turned out my immune system had got weaker due to the cancer. That's why I was picking up all these infections.

But I went into survival mode.

'OK, how can I get through this?' I asked.

Cancer wouldn't beat me.

I needed daily chemo for six months. Exhausted, all I did was stay in bed, eat and watch TV.

I gorged on pizza, crisps and calorie-laden sandwiches.

I knew it was junk – but, truth was, I was comfort eating.

The last part of chemo was the worst – I lost my hair and had no energy.

I'd also been given steroids as part of my treatment. A side-effect was weight gain – so by

The word 'cancer' echoed in my head. I couldn't believe it.

Take LIFE BACK



BALLOONED



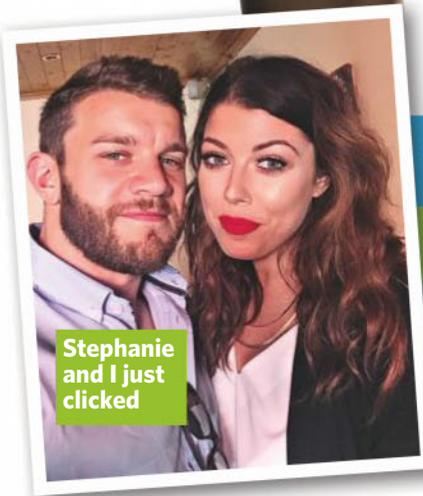
BEEFCAKE!

February 2014, I'd ballooned from 15st to 21st. 'I don't feel like me any more,' I sighed to mates, self-conscious. There was no point dwelling on it, though. It was time to take back my life.

Seeing results

I contacted my local gym, The Performance Project, and enquired about personal-training sessions. 'I'm very weak, I'm not sure if I can even walk to the end of the road,' I said to Jerome, a personal trainer. He was understanding. And, that March, I had my first session. Within five minutes of body-weight squats, I was huffing and puffing for breath. 'Break,' I panted, exhausted. I persevered, though. I also cut down on junk food and started eating more protein and fresh veg. My body was changing and I felt so much better. After six months, I was doing four weight-training sessions a week, and I'd slimmed down to a trim 13st 8lb. 'Looking good,' Jerome said. In fact he was so impressed with my new buff bod, he shared photos of me on the

gym's Facebook page. I tried to hide my blushes when he said his friend Stephanie had got in touch. 'She keeps asking about you,' he winked. 'She must like what she saw on Facebook.' I didn't think anything more of it - but, days later, Stephanie sent me a WhatsApp message. *You've made amazing progress*, she complimented me. We hit it off, so I invited her to a country pub for a drink. Confident and chatty, Stephanie was just my type. We clicked immediately and I knew she was The One. Now, a year on, we're living together. I'm still training - I even did the Brighton half marathon last year. It's incredible how far I've come. I still have checkups with my cancer specialist every three months - but, so far, so good. It's scary to think my 'hangover' turned out to be something deadly. Thank goodness I got checked out. That hangover from hell saved my life.



Stephanie and I just clicked

'Staying positive'

Stephanie says, 'Sebastian was such a gentleman on our first date, I knew straightaway that we were going to work out. Every day, he opens up more about his cancer. But we're both positive about the future and can't wait to see what it brings.'

WORDS: TRACY GAYTON, SARAH FINLEY. PHOTOS: PRIME FEATURES

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Puzzle Entry

Issue 3, 18 January 2018 Closing date for all entries: **24 Jan 2018** (three working days later for postal entries)

PRIZE PUZZLE ANSWERS

Issue 1, 4 January 2018

Cross It!

```

C   ANTHILL
POOCH   I   O
E   A   G   V   F
SIRE   ASTHMA   LO
T   S   F   U   B   B   O
ODE   U   M   R   L   A   G
O   PRIMROSE
M   U   O   W   W
SEAFRONT   A   E
N   F   M   RESIT
UNABLE   O   H   N
F   A   NEW   T   E   A
FRILL   E   S
L   ILLNESS
    
```

Follow It!

```

R   F   P   A   Z   D
ERASE   DRIVER
S   T   O   T   D   N   G
STASHES   OCCUR
D   A   M   P   H   A   L   O   D
F   E   R   E   A   D   Y   A   M   U   S   E
T   S   P   A   W   N   P   O   I   N   T   R
D   U   S   N   A   M   E   N   D   S   I   T
R   O   P   T   I   C   Y   M   A   K   E   S
A   N   Y   L   H   O   A   X   E   R   Y   A
T   T   A   P   E   G   G   S   H   E   E   R
D   I   L   A   T   E   L   O   N   G   U   V
C   E   N   T   R   E   D   O   C   E   D   E   S
S   K   I   D   S   U   B   S   O   Y   A   N   N
E   P   I   S   O   D   E   S   S   A   Y   S
I   T   E   M   A   K   A   T   E   A   T   S   O   B
    
```

Crack It!

```

A   M   A   Z   E   O   C   H   R   E   I
P   G   L   B   A   M   O   N   K
T   R   A   V   E   L   L   E   R   I   D
L   I   V   I   D   O   T   T   E   D
Y   E   N   A   N   G   E   L   F
S   T   E   I   N   S   T   I   L
H   O   T   H   E   A   D   N   Q   I   N
O   V   Y   P   E   T   U   N   I   A
R   E   C   E   I   P   T   A   T
R   R   N   A   S   U   B   T   L   E   R
A   L   K   A   L   I   P   R   R   A
O   N   O   I   S   E   M   A   T
J   A   C   K   E   T   N   E   P   U
D   I   B   O   A   R   D   R   O   O   M
N   E   W   S   O   C   E   O   M
D   S   I   X   T   H   R   U   N   N   Y
    
```

```

M   B   H   V   G   U   N   I   P   S   Q   Z   Y
K   C   T   L   O   W   E   A   F   D   R   X   J
    
```

Win Without Finishing

```

I   A   C   A   G   U
C   R   U   C   I   A   L   A   N   G   U   I   S   H
R   H   R   C   Y   E
C   A   L   I   B   R   E   C   H   A   R   A   D   E
T   I   N   Y   A   O
W   I   N   G   C   O   L   L   A   R   P   O   P   S
O   U   L   F   E
U   N   C   O   N   T   R   O   V   E   R   S   I   A   L
A   P   V   A   C
F   L   I   P   T   I   E   B   R   E   A   K   E   R
O   I   T   I   R   P   L   N   F
G   R   O   S   S   L   Y   P   L   A   Y   F   U   L
E   T   I   L   U   H
S   E   T   T   L   E   R   I   G   N   O   B   L   Y
T   E   R   S   W   Y
    
```

Bitesize! Boat

Sudoku! 2,1,4

Strike It!

Imaginary

Number Fit! 9372

Crack It! Decayed

Ed's Test Colley Hill

Puzzle 1 Ed's Test p3

Final answer

Puzzle 5 Cross It! p32

Final answer

Puzzle 2 Follow It! p8

Final answer

Puzzle 6 Sudoku! p32

Final answer

Puzzle 3 Crack It! p22

Final answer

Puzzle 7 Strike It! p46

Final answer

Puzzle 4 Bitesize! p23

Final answer

Puzzle 8 Number Fit! p46

Final answer

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M Stephens,
Oldham.

Number Fit!

H Chalkley,
Suffolk.

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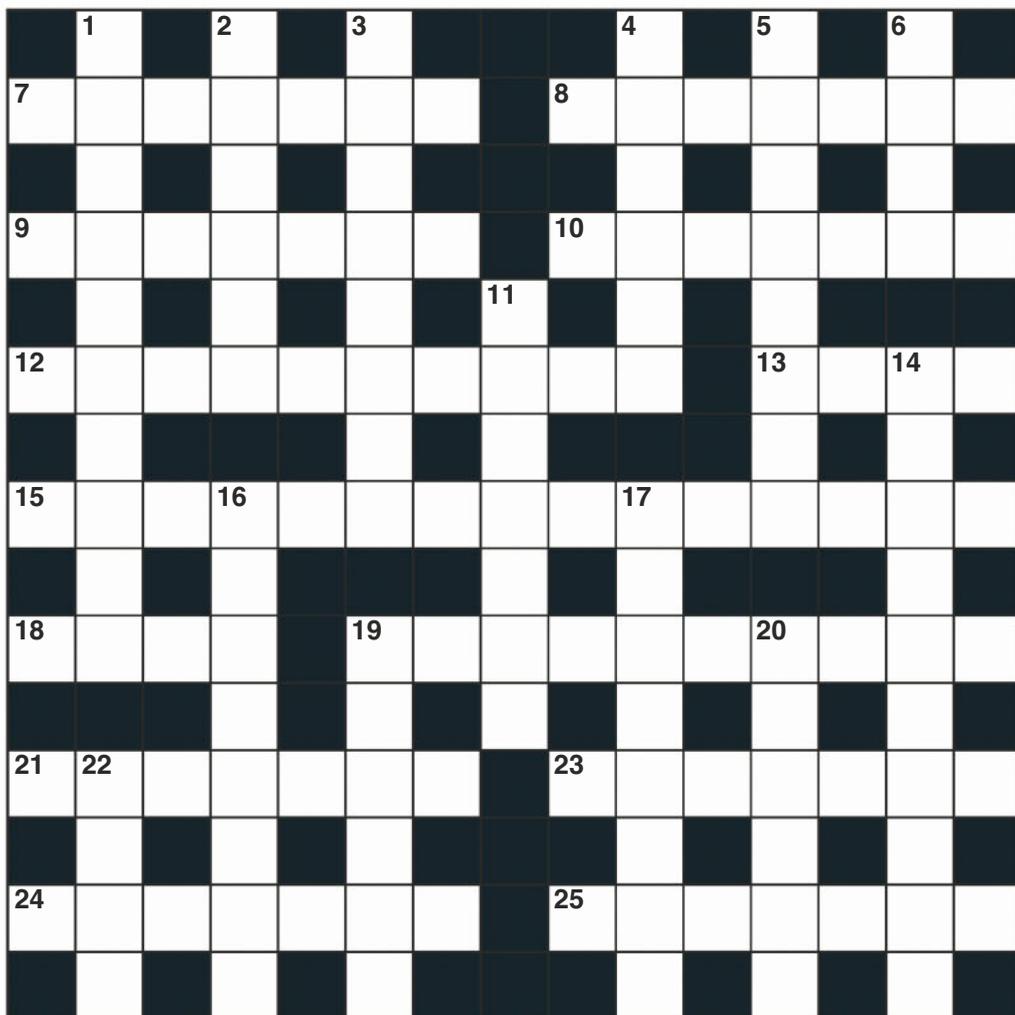
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ACROSS

- 7 Clashing, causing physical shock (7)
- 8 Noisy to chew, eg nuts or crispy lettuce (7)
- 9 Warship, traditionally built for speed (7)
- 10 Remedy, free from error (7)
- 12 Grass-court game (4,6)
- 13 One likely to inherit (4)
- 15 Phrase describing vain person (from plumage of showy bird (5,2,1,7))
- 18 Indolent (4)
- 19 Voice amplifier (10)
- 21 Thin climbing stem of plant (7)
- 23 Travel to and fro (7)
- 24 Hospital machine (7)
- 25 Pungent (7)

DOWN

- 1 Blonde (4-6)
- 2 Fire-breathing beast, symbol of Wales (6)
- 3 Curse, denunciation (8)
- 4 Oversights, mistakes (6)
- 5 Lawless (8)
- 6 Smart, fashionable (4)
- 11 Early childhood (7)
- 14 Undependable (10)
- 16 Everlasting, eternal (8)
- 17 Fiscal, monetary (8)
- 19 Young woman, scoreless over in cricket (6)
- 20 Boiled, minty sweet (6)
- 22 Inscribe with acid (4)



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**Pick
Me
Up!**
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You Could Be

OUR NEXT

BIG WINNER!

Sarah

**C won £1,454
on Emerald**

Playing my Emerald tickets, I only had a couple of games left, so was pleased when I won £4.50 on two lines. Then out came my numbers for the house. I won the Emerald Progressive Jackpot of **£1,454**. I couldn't believe it! My mum won **£8,888** a few weeks earlier on the Round The Clock game. I've done up my house, treated my family to days out and bought my children bunk beds. The rest will go on more for my home and on a deposit towards a holiday.

**Janette L
won £39,588
on Sapphire**

My amazing Progressive jackpot win was in the Sapphire Room and I saw my balance change to over **£39K!** The money will be used for a holiday and home improvements, including a new boiler. Also I splashed out on goodies for my work colleagues who wanted to help me celebrate my brilliant win!

**Charlie C
won £3,333
on Sapphire**

I won a jackpot in Sapphire within minutes of being on the site. I put £1.20 on 12 tickets and went into Double Bubble. I saw that I'd won £34 - and next thing I knew, I'd won the jackpot of **£3,333!** All I could say was, 'OMG! I've won.' My winnings will go towards a garden makeover. Thank you so much, you made my week!

Jill W won £1,000 on Bejeweled Bingo

When I won **£1,000** on Bejeweled Bingo, it was totally unexpected. I nearly fell off my chair when I realised that my numbers had come up. I've spent some of the money on decorating my hall, and the rest I've put away. I'm going on holiday to Spain for my 60th birthday later in the year, so it'll be nice to have extra spending money.

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